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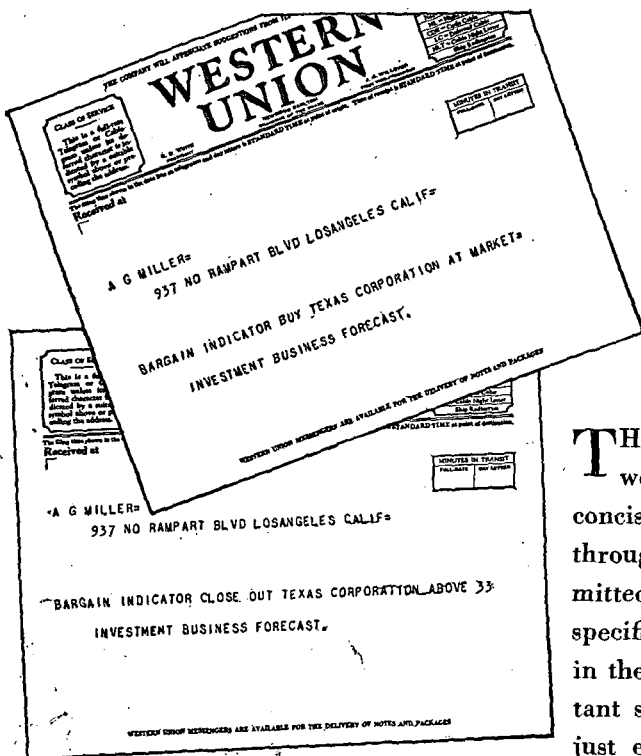
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VOLUME
XXXVII

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New York

In his introduction to this account of a famous Senate election contest, Professor William Benet Munro states the need of "a saner attitude toward the whole problem of money in elections" and declares that the case for Newberry has not hitherto been fairly presented. After collecting many records of the trials, Mr. Ervin has sought to prove that Newberry was not guilty of violating the Federal Corrupt Practices Act in 1918 when he defeated Henry Ford in the Michigan senatorial campaign. His failure to file a personal election account is dismissed as trivial; the charges that the campaign was corrupt are denied. Much of the evidence hangs on Newberry's contention that the campaign expense of nearly \$200,000 was paid by relatives and political allies, and that he himself did not spend more than \$3750, which was allowed by law. It is alleged, too, that the instances of attempted bribery were unknown to the candidate. Mr. Ervin suggests that Newberry may have violated laws which ought to exist but insists that he did not violate any laws actually existing. Whether one agrees with this interpretation, it must be granted that the book is a timely and important sermon in view of the 1936 campaign. There is an index.



OLD JULES.

By Mari Sandoz.

Little, Brown

\$3

6 x 9; 424 pp.

Boston

This book, awarded the \$5000 Atlantic Monthly Non-Fiction Prize, is the life history of one of Nebraska's first settlers, Jules Sandoz. Mari Sandoz, one of Old Jules' six children by his fourth wife, tells of his brutal treatment of his wives, the feuds between cattlemen and homesteaders, the droughts and the storms, the incident about the leg which it was just as well Dr. Walter Reed did not amputate, the casual bits of earthy conversation between Jules and other settlers—filled with the gnarled and twisted wisdom which was his—and the various hardships of pioneering on the Western plains. Some of the scenes are unforgettable: the book is every

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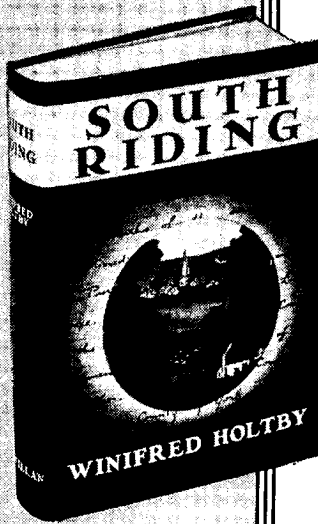
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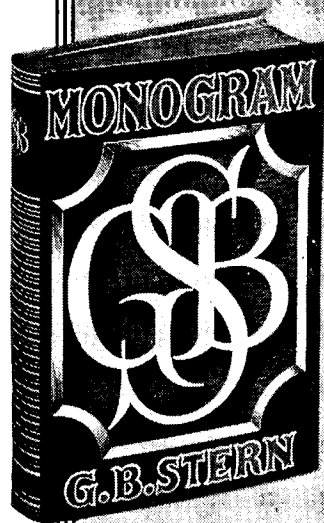
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The American Mercury

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The American MERCURY

IF THE NEW DEALERS WIN

BY FRANK R. KENT

THERE have been few Presidential campaigns in which the breast-beating demagogues with the bull voices have not proclaimed that "the future of the country is at stake". Sometimes there is a trace of truth in these mouth-filling and melodramatic words, but more often they are just so much political gurry. Most of the time, so far as the future of the country is concerned, it makes little difference which Presidential candidate is chosen by the great American people in their quadrennial emotional rush to the ballot box. If one party succeeds the other, there is a grand shift in the federal personnel, a certain expansion of the federal government incidental to every Congress, and an immediate increase in the general waste, cost, and inefficiency, which are part of the price we pay for freedom. But the national direction is unchanged.

Thoughtful men, however, are fairly well agreed that it can be said with literal truth of this 1936 contest that the future of the nation is really involved, in a sense that it has not been for generations. When men say of this fight that we are "at the cross-roads", it is not merely a trite piece of political rhetoric, but a fact. The reason

is simple enough. For the first time, the Republic languishes under the regime of a President who has definitely departed from the American system—to say nothing of the multiplication table. Mr. Roosevelt has tried to operate the government outside the Constitution, has swept aside the fundamental doctrine of States' Rights, has seized, in the name of a dubious emergency, vast powers not intended to be wielded by the Executive, and has thus made mincemeat of the two great underlying principles of American government. The only factor that has prevented a complete remaking of America on the lines laid down by a little group of willful Brain Trusters is the Supreme Court. With that august body, the New Deal came into violent collision, the net result being the collapse of the Administration's two major devices and the creation of a condition of demoralization and bewilderment practically without precedent in history.

With other New Deal legislative enactments now awaiting the axe, with the whole grandiose program bogged down in horrible confusion, with federal finances in an alarmingly sick condition, with the national debt piled mountainously high, with

an accumulated deficit nearing the fifteen-billion mark, with neither the agricultural nor the unemployment problem an inch nearer final solution, and with a great and widening split in his party, Mr. Roosevelt goes into his campaign for re-election very definitely on the defensive and, as attested by numerous polls and straw votes, with the tide running full against him. Belonging as he does (at least nominally) to the minority political party, this situation, the truth of which is hardly open to dispute, normally would mean his defeat. Indeed, defeat would be considered certain but for what are regarded as his unique political assets acquired through the New Deal's vast spending policy. These can be listed as follows:

First, the supposedly solid support of the subsidized farmers in the great agricultural states, won through the "gentle rain of checks" with which they have been steadily drenched.

Second, the supposed gratitude of the millions of recipients of federal relief funds, including the multitudes vacationing in CCC camps or dawdling on various public works jobs.

Third, the influence and power of an extraordinary federal machine, expanded and increased since 1933 beyond anything heretofore imagined. To the civil payroll of the government have been added in three years nearly 300,000 new and greedy jobholders, bringing the total close to 1,000,000, exclusive of the judicial, military, and legislative departments.

Fourth, endorsement by some leaders of organized labor, and the attraction to the Roosevelt standard of radicals and claim-jumpers of all degrees.

Fifth, the outright appeal for class-hatred against the business and financial interests of the country, which is to be the basic strategy of the New Deal campaign.

In brief, the efforts will be to array the Have-nots against the Haves, in order, as the ineffable Professor Tugwell phrases it, to "effect an irresistible alliance between the workers and the farmers" against what the Administration evangelists choose to call "creatures of entrenched greed". And in this category the New Dealers put everyone who disagrees with them.

Now it is true that efforts to stir up class-antagonism have been made in this country a number of times in the past, but never with success. The difference on this occasion, however, is quite apparent. Heretofore, class-hatred has been the stock in trade of the cheap demagogues of the minority, those on the outside trying to get in. But today marks the first time that such a campaign policy has been adopted by a federal administration elaborately equipped with patronage and power, determined to perpetuate itself by whatever means it can. Certainly it is the first time in history that a President of the United States has struck that campaign keynote, and initiated, encouraged, and promoted a fight along those lines. It is, upon sober reflection, the first time that men sympathetic and susceptible to this sort of strategy have ever been intrusted with positions of governmental control. To those familiar with the group of yogis who have most influenced the Roosevelt mind, this class appeal appears the logical and inevitable outcome of the Brain Trust philosophy. By others, it is regarded as the last desperate expedient of a man who suddenly realizes that his popularity is on the wane and the odds are greatly against him. It is impossible to account for the Roosevelt strategy in any other way.

No one can accurately forecast the probable result. The question is whether the above-listed political assets, in a Hate-the-Rich campaign conducted by the Ins in-

stead of the Outs, can succeed. My personal belief is that it cannot. But there are sufficient new factors in the situation to create considerable doubt, and to make imperative some serious thought on the subject of what is likely to happen to America should the New Dealers win next November.

II

To appreciate the meaning to the country of another four years of Roosevelt control, it seems essential to keep clearly in mind that the one obstacle to the complete fruition of the grandiose New Deal program is the Supreme Court. That tribunal has destroyed the two great Administration schemes for regimenting industry and agriculture. Before this article is printed, it may have destroyed others. Whether or not the Court versus the President becomes the dominant issue in the campaign, the following observations are true:

First, the decisions of the Court have neither altered nor diluted the New Dealers' belief in their Utopian plans.

Second, there exists among the Brain Trusters, from Mr. Roosevelt down, a deep resentment against the Court as the chief barrier in their path.

Third, victory for Mr. Roosevelt in November will be construed as a vindication of his policies and a mandate to go ahead on the lines laid down by the Tugwells and Wallaces—Court and Constitution notwithstanding.

Fourth, there is every intention, both on the part of Mr. Roosevelt and of his impatient advisers, to go the limit toward collectivism if they get the chance.

Now quite clearly, even if vindicated at the polls, the New Dealers cannot go ahead unless in some way they control the Court. To amend the Constitution in the regular

way is far too slow a process for the apostles of the New Regimentation. And there are only three ways by which Court control can be secured. Congress, under Executive direction, can enlarge the Court, thus giving the President his opportunity to pack it. Or Mr. Roosevelt can wait for the inevitable vacancies and, by appointment, make the majority pro-New Deal. Or Congress can take away from the Court the right to declare its legislation unconstitutional, which obviously scraps the Constitution. In effect, any one of these methods of dealing with the Court means making the Constitution just what the President wants it to be. I think it can be set down as certain that one of these methods will immediately be adopted should the New Deal win in November.

What this means is that, in the event of victory, the last legal bar to the New Deal planners will come down, and they can whoop ahead full steam with their favorite collectivist ideas, reviving the AAA, reorganizing the NRA, expanding the TVA, extending the WPA, enlarging the RRA, continuing the RFC—until every last phase of human activity is directed, supervised, regulated, and controlled from Washington, D. C. In brief, the amazing alphabetical bureaucracy, foisted upon us in the name of a dubious emergency and supposedly to meet a national crisis, will be yoked on our necks as a permanent form of government. And that means, as the late ex-Governor Ritchie of Maryland pointed out, that two great governmental principles now imbedded in the Constitution will be precipitously sacked. The first of these is based on the American dual system of state and nation whereby the federal government can do only such things as are expressly or by fair implication delegated to it, all other powers being reserved to the states or to the people. The

second is the division of powers of government into three departments, separate and distinct from each other, with no one of them authorized to exercise the functions of the other two.

It seems to me impossible to doubt that a New Deal success in the coming election is sure to be followed by this Presidential control of the Supreme Court, gained one way or another. The logical progress from that point will be toward an unlimited extension of the Executive power. States' Rights, now greatly obscured, will wholly disappear. The President, luxuriating in his new power, will dominate both the judicial and legislative branches of the government. That is the tendency of the New Deal; that is what will inevitably happen if the New Dealers win. I do not see how the fact can be disputed.

This unpleasing prospect means a complete change in American government and American life. It means a complete discard of the system of constitutional checks and balances under which we have always operated. It means that ours will no longer be a government by law but, instead, a government by men. It means that power to regulate and control industry, agriculture, capital, and labor, to make experimental rules which have the effect of true law, and to function in the judicial and legislative as well as administrative capacity, will be vested in the Executive and wielded by irresponsible department heads and shoddy bureau chiefs. In brief, the country will be run entirely by a Dictator-President, in whom all authority will rest. For all practical purposes, the so-called coordinate branches of government will be emasculated, and state lines will be completely obliterated.

It cannot be denied that this will be a new system, foreign to the conception of the Constitution, the exact system which

the framers of that instrument took such extraordinary precautions to forestall. It is a system under which true freedom could not survive. Such would be the power of the federal administration, unchecked by the Supreme Court or Congress, that neither home rule, local self-government, nor individual or journalistic liberty could exist, except to the degree permitted by Washington. Under such circumstances, four more years of the New Deal would mean a continuation of the highly unsound experiments to which Mr. Roosevelt is committed, and the initiation of an unpredictable number of others of which we have not yet even heard. It would end all thought of a balanced budget, every possibility of a return to normal governmental activities, any chance for a reduction in governmental expenses. The nature of the forces now behind Mr. Roosevelt, coupled with his own well-known temperament and inclination, preclude these things.

Even if he wanted to, the President could not slow down or turn around: the impetus of his campaign and its character, if successful, are bound to carry him relentlessly forward. That entails more, not less confusion, greater, not diminished cost, larger deficits, heavier debt, increased taxes, more handouts to the underprivileged, further punitive assaults upon wealth, and an accelerated speed toward national bankruptcy either by the repudiation route or the equally effective method of printing-press money.

It isn't going to be the easiest thing in the world to avert these evils, even should Mr. Roosevelt be beaten by a candidate pledged to end experimentation, and sworn to return, through economy and reduction in the size and cost of the government, to a sound financial basis. Any successor to Mr. Roosevelt, backed by the solid

business interests and the great mass of conservatives, is going to have a hard job keeping the country from going over the brink. But a New Deal victory, won despite bitter opposition of the substantial elements and with the aid of every variety of radical agitator, crackpot liberal, organized minority leader, and scatter-the-dough progressive in the country, just

about makes it impossible to stop—even if Mr. Roosevelt would like to—and of that he gives not the slightest indication in word or deed.

Another four years of the New Deal, and the governmental situation, now incredibly confused, will be wholly out of hand. It isn't communism we need fear—it is chaos.



VERGE

BY FRANCES FROST

THE year is early, and the light half-gone
 From knotty twigs, from alder
 Thin-red by roads; and red from ended sun
 Bends the gray-branched sky. The meadow-brook grows wilder

At wind-fall; and each emerald frog blows out
 His throat to a silver bubble.
 The crows descend and their hungry cries are stout
 In the stiff and darkening stubble.

No bucket gleams on the maple that has shed
 Its crimson foam of buds. A lean-faced farmer
 Drives his belled cattle to a green-flushed bed;
 The windless land turns warmer.

The evening dips toward shadow, the melting year
 Aches toward stalk and flower.
 It is our season, it is our meadowy air:
 We walk in the clear, in the waiting incredible hour

While the balance dips toward summer, we who are lost,
 Who are more temporal even
 Than the clenched dark bud containing the leafy ghost,
 Than the Spring that vanishes under a quiet heaven.

THE ROOSEVELT MYTH

BY ASHMUN BROWN

IT was born in the first year of the New Deal. We Washington correspondents were its parents. Day after day we informed the gullible public that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was by far the smartest politician who had ever occupied the White House. We even believed the myth ourselves.

But we don't any more. We have dropped the idea, like a hot potato, from our stock of clichés. And we admit we were wrong. The events of the past year have proved that the President is anything but a super-politician. The record is strewn with instances of shortsighted action, ill-chosen words, and impolitic conduct. The myth has been exploded.

A key to whatever mystery may surround the birth of the Roosevelt reputation for astuteness, and likewise its recent sad demise, may be found in the dictionary definition of the word politic: "sagacious and wary in planning"; and in its synonyms: "artful, crafty, cunning, diplomatic, discreet, judicious, prudent, sagacious, shrewd, wary, wily, wise". For certainly when Franklin D. Roosevelt was a candidate in 1932, and in his conduct as President in 1933 and 1934, he appeared to possess and to employ these very characteristics. Indeed, he was a continuing surprise to those of us who had known him in Washington in the days when he was merely a young, attractive, sincere, and not greatly distinguished Assistant Secretary of the Navy. At that period no one credited him with a pro-

found knowledge of politics or of government. But his spectacular election, his obvious ability to capitalize for his own benefit the existing mood of the American people, the astounding rapidity with which he moved in his first hundred days, the ease with which he brought Congress to heel, the amazing and revolutionary changes he accomplished in shifting the direction and enlarging the functions of the federal government, and the national acclaim which swept him to an unbelievable popularity — all this convinced the correspondents that here was a politician to make Machiavelli, Mark Hanna, Talleyrand, and Boies Penrose hang their heads in utter shame. This, surely, was a fellow "sagacious and wary in planning" and likewise "artful, shrewd, crafty, cunning, wily," and all the rest.

Mr. Roosevelt's masterful playing of politics was so successful that it commanded awed respect even among his most ribald opponents. And success, temporary though it may be, is after all the only yardstick we Washington correspondents are inclined to accept for measuring the difference between good politics and bad. The man who gets away with it is a good politician; the man who doesn't usually retires to the old homestead after the next election. Thus the martyred Huey Long will always survive in popular memory as one of the best. Measured in like fashion, Mr. Roosevelt qualified as a master politician from the early part of his administration until after the 1934 elections, which in

themselves were a convincing national tribute to his acumen.

But while the country as a whole retained its faith, the correspondents began to weaken. Their doubts grew as the indications became plainer that the man who had planned the various imbecilities of the New Deal could not be altogether "sagacious and wary". The preposterous NRA was cracking up dismally. A horde of hungry bureaucrats descended on Washington like a fearful plague. As the alphabet was gradually exhausted, it became increasingly clearer that, for all its soulful protestations, the New Deal did not offer and never had offered any even half-way suitable plans for lifting the country out of the depression and accomplishing at the same time gigantic social, political, and economic reforms. The New Deal, in other words, was revealed as entirely experimental, opportunistic, and lunatic in character. Despite an unparalleled ballyhoo the cold, hard facts began to show that, instead of one complete plan, there was a multitude of contradictory plans, each operating on its own and often clashing with its rivals within the tottering structure erected by the Brain Trust. The hasty exodus of sadly-disappointed New Dealers from the Administration got under way as the ship sank deeper. And it was plain the Master Mind had not anticipated any such developments. A good politician, one was reminded, anticipates every possible reaction. . . .

It was in this respect, then, that Mr. Roosevelt failed throughout 1935 to live up to the standards of political sagacity set for him in the public mind. How much this failure is understood by the public even now is a matter open to debate. But that it is fully appreciated by all practical politicians and by the correspondents is no longer to be questioned. The Roosevelt myth has vanished into thin air.

Monday, May 27, 1935, may be starred as the date on which the myth began its precipitous decline. It was on that day that the Supreme Court, in a devastating decision, outlawed the NRA. At once it became clear that the President was totally unprepared for such a blow. Nothing of the sort had been anticipated. The Administration was demoralized. Neither the *Führer* nor his Brain Trust had prepared a plan of retreat in the event of such a decision.

How completely Mr. Roosevelt misjudged the temper of the country was demonstrated a few days later when, in his now famous press conference of May 31, he exhibited anger, disappointment, and chagrin in a petulant tirade against the Supreme Court lasting one hour and twenty minutes by the clock. Taking as his text several of the Court's *obiter dicta*, he permitted himself to exaggerate grossly the effect, actual and potential, of the rulings, and to declare that the country had been thrown "back to the horse-and-buggy days". No President has ever made so intemperate an utterance at a press conference. The public reaction was immediate and far from complimentary to the masterful politician.

Yet, in less than three weeks after that debacle, Mr. Roosevelt plunged himself and his Administration into another clumsy situation which surprised, bewildered, and embarrassed his supporters, and created the undeniable impression that blind impulse rather than sound reasoning had motivated his course.

The business began with a surprise message to Congress on June 19, submitting the Soak-the-Rich scheme of taxation, and ended up in a roaring farce of misunderstanding, confusion, and double-crossing. In his budget message in January the President had said that he "did not consider it advisable at this time to propose any

new or additional taxes". He asked only that the emergency nuisance and other excise taxes, levied the year before, be re-imposed, as the law exacting these revenues would die by its own limitations on June 30 if it were not re-enacted. Proceeding on the assumption that Mr. Roosevelt meant exactly what he said, the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee were perfecting the proper bill for continuing the rates. Both committees announced that no other tax legislation would be attempted.

But in the meantime Huey Long was keeping up an incessant demand for the Share-the-Wealth philosophy. And his idea was gaining alarming popularity. It was then that Mr. Roosevelt sprang his surprise taxation message, supposedly to counteract the Long campaign. Congressional leaders, not having been admitted to the Presidential confidence, were dumbfounded. They did not know whether the President meant a business double of the Long bid, or was merely making an original psychic bid of his own. And they couldn't find out. Immediately after dispatching his message Mr. Roosevelt departed for New London to see the Harvard-Yale boat races and went from there to Hyde Park for the week-end.

It was only after many excited conferences on Capitol Hill that the leaders concluded the President did not expect action at the session on his recommendations. But no sooner was this apparent than Senators La Follette and Wheeler, traditional Soak-the-Rich advocates, moved into action. They obtained the signatures of twenty-two senators to a round-robin pledging immediate enactment of the plan of taxation suggested by the President. Their scheme was to attach the new rates as a rider on the pending bill extending the excise taxes; and their threat was that if the rider were not attached, passage of the bill by the June 29

deadline would be blocked. Administration leaders haughtily declared they would not permit any rider legislation.

Thus matters stood until Monday, June 24, when the President returned to Washington and summoned the congressional leaders to a night conference. It was at the conclusion of this conference that Senator Robinson formally told the newspapermen that the decision had been "to press action on the recommendations of the President pertaining to amendments to the tax laws at the present session". On this authority and with additional comment obtained from Senator Pat Harrison, chairman of the Finance Committee, the newspapers announced on Tuesday that the decision was to attach the new legislation to the pending measure and get the whole thing enacted before the coming Saturday night.

This surrender to the Wheeler-La Follette group stimulated immediate opposition. That day and the next, newspapers from coast to coast rang with vociferous denunciations of the White House program. And then at his Wednesday press conference the President blandly informed the correspondents that their reports had been wrong; that he had not demanded excessive speed; that he did not expect his recommendations to be attached to the pending bill and put through by Saturday night. Correspondents who had received from senators in whom they had absolute confidence a version totally at variance with what the President was saying, gasped in amazement. The questions which followed reflected their anger and incredulity. And their gasps were presently echoed by certain other senators when informed of what the President had said. As good and loyal partisans, however, the latter swallowed their irritation and proceeded to issue statements confirming the official version. This was the time when Pat Harrison nearly choked to death. . . .

The conclusions to be drawn from this incident are obvious. Suffice it to say here that a lasting impression was left on the minds of legislators and newspaper correspondents alike. And the Roosevelt myth suffered another deflation.

II

The myth shrank still further when the President needlessly submitted himself again to stinging criticism and weakened the faith of large elements of the population in his political sagacity by writing an extraordinary letter to Representative Sam Hill, the Democratic chairman of the House Ways and Means sub-committee, then considering that darling of the Brain Trusters, the Guffey coal bill.

"I hope your committee," wrote the President on July 7, 1935, "will not permit doubts as to constitutionality, however reasonable, to block this legislation."

Here was a recurrence to the theme of his press conference of May 31 that had startled the country and frightened so many constitutional Democrats away from the Administration. To say that this letter was impolitic is to put the matter mildly. In it the President revealed his own mental processes and his conception of the Constitution and of government under its restrictions. As a Presidential communication to the legislative arm of the government it is unique among the nation's state papers. No other President in history has ever felt it necessary, in obtaining the passage of a measure, to counsel his supporters to violate the Constitution.

Shortly after this affair, namely, on July 24, 1935, Mr. Roosevelt again exposed his mind to the public in a fashion that clearly was impolitic, and neither prudent, sagacious, nor discreet, and thus further lowered his reputation as a smart politician.

Voluntarily and with the evident desire to have his opinions published, Mr. Roosevelt announced to his press conference that he was opposed to the practice of corporations making donations to charity. To do so was a misapplication of the stockholders' money, a reduction of their dividends without permission. Furthermore, the President submitted, the real purpose of such charitable gifts by corporations was to "buy good will", and that was an evil in itself. At once the officials of national organizations such as the Community Chest and other large charitable societies overwhelmed the President with facts and arguments demonstrating his error. Mr. Roosevelt was then forced to make a public announcement commending and approving drives for charitable funds and asking all to contribute. This second statement could only be construed as a weak apology. The myth shrivelled further.

Next came the magnificent blunder of the "preacher letters" in the following September. To many thousands of clergymen of all denominations there went forth from the White House a circular letter, bearing an excellent reproduction of the President's signature, begging these men of God for their "counsel and advice". Mr. Roosevelt asked in a wholly non-partisan manner that they tell him of conditions in their own communities and how "our government can better serve our people". The spirit of a great and noble soul, struggling to improve the conditions of common humanity, turning to the church for guidance and help, was touchingly breathed in every sentence of the missive.

But suddenly there came the revelation that, back on March 5, 1935, six months before, Governor La Follette of Wisconsin had sent an almost identical letter to the clergymen of his State. Describing the gigantic task of improving national condi-

tions, Governor La Follette, to quote but one sample phrase, had written:

No one man and no single group can do it. We shall have to work together for the common end of better spiritual and material conditions for the American people.

The Roosevelt letter put it this way:

No one man or single group can do it. We shall have to work together for the common end of better spiritual and material conditions for the American people.

That the White House had bodily stolen the idea and even the language of that accomplished politician, Governor La Follette, to flatter the clergymen of the nation and line them up in political support of the New Deal, was all too apparent. Resentment and indignation, together with bitter attacks, characterized many of the replies which ministers sent to the President — and gave to the newspapers in their home towns.

Thus was another precedent shattered. No President of the United States had ever before been caught in the perpetration of such a cheap political trick, which lacked even the merit of being original. The only excuse offered was that Mr. Roosevelt was so busy that he had not given attention to the matter — in other words, the old alibi that an underling in the White House, unknown to the President, had made a mistake. Well, there was once a really smart politician also named Roosevelt who lived in the White House. Can any one whose memory goes back far enough imagine him permitting *his* signature to be used on White House stationery — on any sort of circular letter — without knowing all the facts and circumstances?

III

Such were the major reasons for the collapse of the Roosevelt myth in 1935. Early this year, following the sweeping decision of the Supreme Court outlawing the AAA and uprooting the vital principle of much New Deal legislation, other incidents developed. They are so fresh in the public mind as to need no recapitulation here. The case stands very well even without them. The suggestion that Franklin Delano Roosevelt is the smartest President in history is no longer a shibboleth of the Washington correspondents. A new idea has already been substituted, so quick is the whirl of the presses. It has been most neatly phrased by Arthur Krock, chief of the Washington Bureau of the *New York Times*. In his dispatch of January 2, relating to the President's arrangements to deliver his message on the State of the Union (laughter) at a special night session of the Congress on January 4, Mr. Krock wrote:

No other President, since the radio hook-ups were available, ever thought of using them to make a personal, fireside talk of an annual message to Congress. But Mr. Roosevelt is the best showman the White House has lodged since modern science made possible such an effective dual performance.

So we are now in for a deluge of superlatives about showmanship. That is, until the show closes. Then, perhaps, we will have to admit that the President is not the accomplished actor we now think he is. But the political sagacity myth is a thing of the past. Under the strain of opposition, in the face of the first adversity, the master politician cracked up. Perhaps Mr. Roosevelt can't take it.



PRISON CAMPS OF LIBERTY

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

BEFORE the World War any question as to the value of human liberty, so far as North America and the greater part of Europe were concerned, would have seemed banal. Such things as regular elections, freedom of press and speech, security against arbitrary arrest and execution, were taken for granted in almost all countries of consequence. People could freely leave their own frontiers and travel in other lands. Concentration camps and forced-labor cantonments were unknown. The whole trend was in the direction of extending the area of political, personal, and civil liberty. Of course there were dark spots on the European horizon, such as Czarist Russia and the semi-Oriental Balkans; and there were individual cases when justice and freedom were obviously denied and trampled on. Such cases, however, were exceptions to be denounced, not rules of administrative practice to be accepted as normal and regular.

Yet one of the most ironical and portentous results of that war which was supposed to safeguard the world for democracy has been the postwar contraction of the area wherein relatively free institutions prevail. Democracy, in the sense of effective popular control over the workings of the governmental machine, survives today only in the United States, Great Britain and its self-governing Dominions, France, and a few of the smaller countries of northern and western Europe, with Czechoslovakia a lonely oasis amid the dictator-

ships of the central and eastern portions of the Continent.

The scales in pre-war Germany were weighted in favor of the aristocratic and propertied classes; but Germany under the Kaiser was a paradise for John Stuart Mill compared with the Nazi Third Reich. Parliamentary in pre-war Italy worked poorly; but an Italian could express views divergent from those of his government without having to anticipate an enforced trip to a penal island or a beating or a stiff dose of castor-oil. The Soviet regime has not only taken over the whole Czarist technique of repressing "dangerous thoughts" (censorship, espionage, arbitrary arrest, and banishment); it has greatly intensified it. When Czar Alexander II was bombed to death in 1881, five revolutionaries who participated in the plot were put to death. When Sergei Kirov, one of Stalin's chief lieutenants, was assassinated in 1934, one hundred and seventeen persons were shot, of whom only thirteen, judging from the laconic Soviet official *communiqués*, were actually charged with complicity. One does not find in Czarist legislation any parallel for the Soviet law of August 7, 1932, prescribing the death penalty for theft of State property (which in Russia means almost all property), or for the decree issued in the summer of 1934, under which innocent dependents of any Soviet citizen who flees from the country are to be punished with five years of banishment to Siberia.

In theory, as in practice, liberty today is assailed as it has not been for a century. The two main governmental philosophies which have developed since the war, communism and fascism, are contemptuous of freedom in principle and utterly destructive of it in actual methods of rule. One might have imagined that a reasonable human being's reaction to the late Armageddon would have been intense aversion to violence, cruelty, and bloodshed, regardless of the professed objective. But, on the contrary, a hard-boiled psychology is one of the outstanding characteristics not only of the avowed communists and fascists, but of the fringe of sympathizers which each doctrine has attracted. It is lightly assumed that it doesn't make the slightest difference how many human eggs are broken if only the perfect communist or fascist omelette comes out in the end.

Now it would be an over-simplification to suggest that fascism and communism are identical. But there is so strikingly much in common between the ruling-class psychology and the practical methods of governing which now prevail in the Soviet Union, in Germany, and in Italy, that these two challenges to liberty may fairly be examined together.

The typical enemies of liberty in the pre-war period were the traditional autocrat and the ambitious soldier who played the role of a small-scale Napoleon. Both the hereditary and the self-made ruler of this type bothered very little about public opinion or the dissemination of favorable propaganda. The rulers rose and fell, depending on the reliability of their soldiers and their police. But the communist-fascist technique of remaining in power is more subtle and more formidable. It is based first of all on a recognition of the tremendous potentialities of state-monopolized propaganda in an age when most people

go to school, read newspapers, listen to radio broadcasts, and attend the movies. Side by side with this goes a clear realization of the fact that few individuals possess the stuff of heroes and martyrs. Consequently a regime of calculated frightfulness, with no opportunity even for public martyrdom, a regime of secret killings without public trial, of wholesale brutality in concentration camps, of widespread espionage, is calculated to break all but the strongest spirits, to make impossible mass opposition to any governmental measures, and to sanctify sacrifices which the omnipotent rulers demand of the masses—for their own ultimate good, of course. The inevitable outcome of an extended period of government by propaganda plus terror is that a certain part of the population is converted to a belief in the existing order, that another and probably larger part learns the wisdom of keeping its collective mouth shut, that the obstinate dissidents are cowed and crushed, and that the credulous foreign visitor who comes to see and to admire has an unrivalled opportunity to make a fool of himself.

II

Italian Fascism and German National Socialism came into existence after Russian Bolshevism. And there is not a single trick of administration that the fascist systems did not learn or could not have learned from their Russian predecessor. There is the practice of a single political party, for instance, which gives the ruling group eyes and ears and nerve centers in every part of the country and also affords a sizable organized minority of the people a stake in the existing order and a reason to fear any change. Over and above this party towers the infallible, incomparable *Vozhd*, *Führer*, or *Duce* who is the indispensable

figure in the communist-fascist system of government. The incense of adulation that falls to the lot of a modern dictator would have seemed a little strong to the nostrils of even a Russian Czar or a Byzantine Emperor. Note the following lush outburst from a writer named Avdyenko, in glorification of Stalin:

Centuries shall elapse and the communist generations of the future will deem us the happiest of all mortals that have inhabited this planet throughout the ages, because we have seen Stalin the leader-genius, Stalin the Sage, the smiling, the kindly, the supremely simple. When I met Stalin, even at a distance, I throbbed with his forcefulness, his magnetism and his greatness. I wanted to sing, to shriek, to howl from happiness and exaltation.

Similar ecstatic tributes to Hitler and Mussolini can be found on every hand.

The communist dictatorship in Russia may also lay claim to the credit or discredit of originating the following administrative methods, which the fascist dictatorships were not slow to take over and adapt to their own uses:

(1) Executions without open trial and wholesale sentencing to concentration camps of "counter-revolutionaries", a term that is applied to anyone who is justly or unjustly suspected of harboring critical thoughts about the existing regime.

(2) Treatment of wives and other relatives of political suspects as hostages for good behavior. This system was first used on a large scale by the Reds during the Russian civil war, especially with a view to insuring the loyalty of the pre-war officers who had been mobilized for service in the Red Army.

(3) Making it a grave penal offense for a citizen to leave his country without official sanction. One of the greatest marks of distinction between the free and the unfree countries of the world is that anyone

who is dissatisfied with life in a free country may leave it, unless he is accused of some specific crime. In the unfree countries, especially in the Soviet Union, permission to go abroad is granted suspiciously and reluctantly, and is often arbitrarily withheld if the applicant is suspected of holding unsound political views. The Soviet Union is a vast prison for a not inconsiderable part of its population; escape is a life-and-death adventure.

(4) Finding imaginary scapegoats for the blunders of government. The sabotage trials in the Soviet Union, in one of which two dead men were solemnly indicted for treasonable activities supposedly committed long after their deaths, were admirable dress rehearsals for the Reichstag Fire trial. When a leading National Socialist, Herr Rudolf Hess, recently endeavored to make the Jews responsible for all Germany's woes, from the loss of the war to the present shortage of butter, he was unconsciously following the well-trodden path of the numberless communist orators who attributed the inevitable consequences of ill-conceived and rashly-executed Soviet agrarian policies to the luckless *kulaks*, long after the last *kulak* had been effectively liquidated.

Thus, advocates of communism and fascism have two lines of defense when doubting critics raise the question of the summary and ruthless treatment meted out to dissidents. The first line, especially useful with inexperienced and ill-informed observers who wish to be converted, is to deny flatly even the best authenticated proofs of administrative atrocities. The second and subtler *apologia* is to fall back on the overworked egg-and-omelette theory.

Yet all revolutionary change, one may suggest, demands its victims. What if a few million peasants died in Russia in 1933

as the result of ruthless state requisitions of their food products and failure to extend relief after large-scale famine had set in? The survivors are enjoying all the supposed benefits of collectivized farming under state supervision; some of them have even been honored by personal interviews with Stalin. What if a few hundred thousand Jews were harried and persecuted after the inauguration of the Third Reich? How can this be weighed in the balance against the resurgence of German national unity, of the German national soul? And, in view of the magnificent order, discipline, and accurate keeping of railway schedules which have been characteristic of Italy under fascism, does it matter much if a few incorrigible cranks came to untimely ends, or had to flee the country, or took up an enforced residence on the penal island of Lipari?

III

In contrast to communists and fascists, genuine liberals and democrats do not make of their faith a fetish, an end-in-itself. They believe that liberty was made for man, not man for liberty. The answer to the question whether liberty matters can only be supplied if one first considers the communist and fascist cases against it, and then examines how far communism and fascism have provided more satisfactory conditions of government and daily life to the people who live under these systems.

The communist's justification for the complete suppression of what he would call "bourgeois democracy" (*i.e.*, freedom of press, speech, assembly and political activity unsanctioned by the ruling party, security against arrest, and banishment without trial) is that the Soviet Union is engaged in erecting a new social order of

such promise that nothing should be allowed to hinder its development. The distinctive feature of this new order is that all means of production and national resources are withdrawn from private ownership and placed in the hands of the State. Believing that private property is the root of economic original sin, the communist contends that all means are legitimate if they conduce to the eradication of this evil.

The fascist also pleads revolutionary emergency as the justification for substituting *habeas cadaver* for *habeas corpus*. His ideal is not to destroy private economic enterprise, but to curb, control, and direct it by setting up the State as a super-arbiter, with powers to coerce both capital and labor. He believes that liberalism and democracy are outworn and decadent, and that nations achieve greatness in proportion as individuals are subordinated to the state, which is incarnated in the infallible Leader. Like the communist, the fascist believes strongly in planned economy as a cure for such economic ailments as unemployment and overproduction. While neither Germany nor Italy, where private operation of trade and industry still prevails, has gone as far in the direction of a centralized planned economy as the Soviet Union, both these fascist regimes have regimented private economic activity much more minutely and strictly than democratic governments have found it expedient to do.

Judgments on the success or failure of the communist and fascist experiments naturally vary widely, because there is no universally accepted standard on which verdicts can be based. Something that might impress a Nazi or a communist as a noteworthy and desirable achievement (the expulsion of all the Jews from a Bavarian village or of all the *kulaks* from an Ukrainian county, for instance) might

seem to one who did not share Nazi racial dogmas and communist economic dogmas both inhuman and detrimental, from the standpoint of the general welfare. One may, however, suggest three broad tests of appraisal for the regimes which have deliberately sacrificed liberty, as that term is commonly understood, for the sake of supposedly more important objectives. These tests are material well-being, cultural progress, and the right of the individual, in the language of the Declaration of Independence, to "pursue happiness". How does the balance of comparison between dictatorship and democracy stand on these three counts?

If one takes five typical democracies, the United States, Great Britain, France, Switzerland, and Sweden, there would certainly be little reason for their inhabitants to envy the material lot of the subjects of five equally typical dictatorships, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, Poland, and Yugoslavia. It may be argued that the form of government is not decisive in determining material well-being, and that such factors as natural wealth and incidents of historical development enter into consideration. While this is unquestionably true, the association of a relatively high standard of living in such matters as food, housing, sanitation, means of communication, material conveniences, and free institutions is surely too general to be accidental. What is still more significant, not one of the postwar dictatorships has revealed convincing proof of its ability to give its subjects a higher standard of living as compensation for the freedom of which they have been deprived. All started with great promises and great expectations, most of which remained conspicuously unfulfilled.

The institution of the Corporative State, the enforced harmony between capital and labor in Italy, the much-advertised drain-

ing of marshes and other public works, did not save Italy from feeling the full impact of the world crisis. There can be little doubt that social and economic difficulties represented a main factor in pushing the nation into the current Ethiopian adventure, which offers, at this writing, not the slightest prospect of solving any of the country's economic problems. It is a war where the reward of victory will probably be national bankruptcy and the results of defeat will be incalculably disastrous.

It is surely an ironical commentary on Hitler's claim that he saved Germany from Bolshevism that his regime has already been marked by so many features typical of Soviet administration: concentration camps, rigorous currency restrictions, and food shortages. While there has been a reduction in the number of the unemployed since the Third Reich came into existence (part of which would most probably have occurred in any case, because of the improvement in world economic conditions), this is offset by more hardships among those already in employment. Here again dictatorship has offered no new idea, no saving principle of economic regeneration.

The Soviet Union, most sweeping and far-reaching of all the dictatorships, also offers little support for the theory that the abandonment of individual liberty is a necessary prerequisite to economic well-being. As recently as 1933 the peasants in a large part of the Soviet Union experienced a most devastating famine, the grimmest sort of proof that their standard of living had sunk far below the level of Czarist times. Since 1933 there has been a certain amount of recovery; but years must pass, under the most favorable circumstances, before the terrific loss of livestock, which was the result of the compulsory collectivization of the peasant holding, can be made good.

The peasants constitute the majority of the Soviet population. The industrial workers have been the preferred class under the communist dictatorship. Yet the position of the Russian workman today, so far as material things are concerned, is much closer to that of the unemployed American or British worker than to the employed. The Soviet currency has just been restabilized at five rubles to the dollar; and the average monthly wage of the industrial worker is 170 rubles. Thirty-four dollars a month might seem a rather modest average wage almost two decades after a revolution that was primarily made in the interest of the manual working class. Still, by Eastern European standards, it would not be so low if the dollars had large purchasing power. But this is emphatically not the case. A recent dispatch from Moscow mentioned the following food prices: butter, two dollars a pound; bread, sixty cents a loaf; beef, seventy-five cents a pound.

It has always seemed to me that the Russian famine of 1933 was the most overwhelming proof of the necessity of civil and political liberties as a safeguard for the common man against extreme exploitation at the hands of what Nietzsche called "the coldest of all cold monsters", the State. This famine was political, not climatic. By exacting its full pound of flesh, by scouring the countryside for the peasants' pitiful hidden stocks of grain and vegetables and confiscating them, by failing to grant relief when mass-mortality from starvation and related diseases set in, the Soviet authorities incurred the full responsibility for a famine that cost millions of lives. Had the peasants possessed any means of controlling the central or local governmental bodies, had they been able to present their case in a free press, no such tragedy could conceivably have occurred.

A milder illustration of the same point is to be found in the resistance which the Soviet program of cotton expansion in Central Asia encountered among the natives of that region. A recent dispatch from Moscow to the *Christian Science Monitor* contains the following suggestive sentences:

There was both active and passive resistance to Soviet efforts to expand cotton areas at the expense of grain regions. The revolt was blamed on "kulaks" and "nationalists", but there is reason to believe it was due in part at least to inadequate distribution of food among Central Asian tribes and also to a passive strike against state prices for cotton, which were considered confiscatory.

One hears much of the unquestionable grievances of the share-croppers in America's Southern states. Uncritical admirers of the Soviet economic system might profitably give a little more consideration to the plight of the share-croppers of Central Asia, who have an all-powerful State as a landlord and are deprived of any means of organized political or economic protest when food distribution is inadequate or when prices, dictated by bureaucrats in faraway Moscow, are confiscatory.

Moreover, one sometimes encounters an easy conviction that political and civil liberties are of consequence only to the well-to-do and highly-educated classes, that the masses will be automatically emancipated if only capitalism, in the sense of private ownership and operation of all important economic enterprises, is eliminated. But it seems to me that one of the outstanding and obvious lessons of the Russian experience is that the fullest measure of political and civil liberty is even more necessary under socialism than under capitalism, because the concentration of economic power in a few hands is immensely greater under socialism. A state on the

make is even more ruthless, because more irresistible, than a corporation on the make. Soviet prisons and concentration camps today are filled with people who might fairly be called labor agitators, peasants who voiced objections against excessive requisitions and low prices for their products, workers who resisted the intensive speed-up of labor that is now going on in Russia under the name of Stakhanovism.

In fact, there is no country in the world where there is less personal security or where people work under greater nervous strain and tension than in the Soviet Union. The industrial manager or engineer constantly fears that a slip or mistake will be construed as sabotage. The peasant knows that to be denounced to the authorities as a *kulak* or a *kulak*-sympathizer means transportation to a forced-labor camp with short rations and a high death-rate. The Communist Party member is in an agony before the periodic Party purge; some personal enemy may denounce him as unworthy of membership because his wife's uncle once owned a window-glass factory.

As for Soviet methods of abolishing unemployment, they are comparable with Soviet methods of "eliminating insecurity". A recent Moscow *communiqué* announced the completion of a railway construction operation in Eastern Siberia, where the workers were all prisoners, some of them probably ordinary criminals, others political prisoners, including peasants who opposed collective farming. The *communiqué* casually mentioned that the workers often were required to stand to the waist in freezing water. Similar or worse conditions prevailed in the building of the Baltic-White Sea Canal, rushed to completion by serf labor under the supervision of the notoriously merciless Gay-Pay-Oo. One need not underestimate the tragedy to feel

that, given the alternative, one would much rather be unemployed in the United States than employed in the Soviet Union.

IV

The new-style fascist and communist dictatorships differ from former autocracies in another important point: they want their subjects to be able to read and write, although not to think, except along officially prescribed lines. Propaganda, which plays such a big role in the up-to-date dictatorship, is less effective with an illiterate population. So Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union can all point to some creditable achievements in providing instruction and entertainment for the masses. The Italian *Dopo Lavoro* (After Work) movement, the German *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy), and the Soviet state-controlled trade-unions have all done a good deal in the way of providing the workers with cheap vacation trips, opera and theater tickets at reduced prices, and opportunities for excursions to museums and places of historic interest. All three regimes have also encouraged sport and outdoor exercise. But nothing that has been done along these lines would be impossible under a democratic system. And it is in the very nature of dictatorship, whether of the communist or the fascist brand, to be hostile to creative and critical thought.

The Nazi book-burning has not been duplicated in the Soviet Union, yet Russian censors do not yield to their brethren in Berlin and Rome in preventing the printing or the importation from abroad of any works that may contain "dangerous thoughts". History and biography, works on political and social science and economics, all fall under the blight of a vigilant censorship that makes free and objec-

tive research impossible. Imagine, for instance, a Soviet history of the Russian Revolution that candidly appraised the role of Trotsky, or a present-day German history that gave a fair picture of the services rendered to the German cause by Jewish scientists, or an Italian history that painted the full realities of Caporetto.

And when one comes to the question of human happiness under democracy and under dictatorship, how much intangible satisfaction does a young Russian, German, or Italian gain from the mere fact of belonging to the inclusive communist or fascist youth organization, from being in step, marching along, singing the songs that everyone is singing? How far does the unending stream of self-glorification which emanates from every dictatorial regime compensate the Russian, the German, and the Italian for the hardships and deprivations of daily life? It is difficult, probably impossible, to know. Free, uninhibited talk is a rare luxury in a land where everyone has an uneasy consciousness that his neighbor may be a spy and an informer. Professor Tchernavin and his wife, fleeing at the risk of their lives from a Russia which they loved, where they would certainly have made a noteworthy scientific and intellectual contribution under any democratic regime, even under Czarism, are the human symbols of the countless existences that have been torn up by the roots by the violence, oppression, and arbitrary injustice which are the invariably distinctive qualities of dictatorship.

A democratic regime, by its very nature, cannot employ against communists or fascists these methods of total and ruthless suppression. Consequently, the democratic regime is more exposed to undermining from within, and the challenge to liberty represented by the spread of fascism and communism becomes a serious and for-

midable one. What should be done about it? Well, one reassuring consideration is to compare pre-war Russia with pre-war England. The Czarist regime was buttressed to the limit by repressive laws and administrative practices, by soldiers and gendarmes, police and censors. England was as free, so far as expression of opinion was concerned, as any country could be. The contrasted fates of Russia and of Great Britain under the common shock of war afford a convincing and final answer to the question of which method is safer, the method of freedom or the method of tyranny.

The fundamental appeal of freedom must be constructive and creative. Liberty is not a bare abstraction, an academic formula. It is a supremely important practical instrument for carrying on the organized life of society with vastly less cruelty, oppression, and injustice than must exist under dictatorship. It should always be associated with progress, never with mere stagnation and a maintenance of the social and economic *status quo*. How much more of a genuine achievement it is to win a fifty-five or sixty per cent majority in an honest election than to get a unanimous vote of confidence (no other kind has ever been known) at a Soviet Congress or a ninety-five per cent majority in a Hitlerite plebiscite!

In this modern age of rapid social change and scientific advance, it is certainly foolish to be dogmatic on any detail of economic organization. It is not of vital importance whether railroads and public utility enterprises are nationally or municipally or privately owned; every country, provided it retains democratic self-government, can be depended on to find the arrangement that best suits its own needs. But it is a matter of supreme importance whether people can speak and write and

vote freely, whether they can go to bed without a haunting fear of being dragged off to questioning, torture, and exile by secret police, whether they can talk above a whisper about public affairs when there are unknown listeners. Once the juggernaut of the modern dictatorial state rolls over a country, irreparable damage is done to its standards of culture, to the quality

of its human relations, to the most ordinary canons of common decency. The absolute and unconditional value of human liberty is no longer a theoretical proposition. With the record of communism and fascism written large before our eyes, there can be little doubt that the frontier of civilization today closely coincides with the frontier of freedom.



EVIDENCE OF APRIL

BY LIONEL WIGGAM

THE mountain trembles, for the light is changing,
And each ravine betrays an April symbol:
Air grown suddenly sweet, and earth grown spongy,
And sky turned water-color clear and ample.

Scarcely-stirring twigs are taut with promise.
Prismatic pools appear where streams are thawing.
The sleepy serpent wriggles from a crevice
Where paper-like his winter skin is lying.

Color is found, uncertain and spasmodic,
Along the underbrush and in the bracken.
And bird by bird the thicket swells with music:
The winter, like a hoary spell, is broken.

And children leave the town to plunge their fingers
Under the glassy armor of the river,
Climbing the slope with April-loving anger,
Swearing to keep the summertime forever.

THE CREDO OF A NEW DEALER

BY PAUL PALMER

FOR the aid and information of future political historians, THE AMERICAN MERCURY, ever eager to help in such matters, herewith presents one hundred shibboleths of that More Abundant Life under which the Republic now sweats and groans. Careful investigation has established that a full-blown New Dealer believes the following:

I

That the Supreme Court is unconstitutional.

2

That there are at least 700 members of the du Pont family and that each has contributed \$12,000,000 to the American Liberty League.

3

That when President Roosevelt says "My friends" into the microphone, every adult American immediately stops whatever he is doing and stands spellbound.

4

That a horse-and-buggy is the most reprehensible vehicle ever constructed by the hand of man.

5

That the House of Morgan forced the United States into the World War, was instrumental in sinking the *Lusitania*, *Titanic*, and *Vestris*, set the Iroquois Theater fire, and is directly responsible for the poor showing of the Washington Senators in the 1935 baseball season.

6

That the 1936 *Literary Digest* poll is a capitalist plot. (In 1932 it was O.K.)

7

That every time a Republican candidate kisses a baby, the baby dies.

8

That a Treasury bond, placed in the vault of a private bank, increases in value, like wine or whisky.

9

That a pump can be primed by pouring the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans into it.

10

That the Angel Gabriel is a frequent overnight guest at the White House.

11

That farmers ought to get double prices for everything they grow, and a discount of fifty per cent on everything they buy.

12

That the law of supply and demand should be repealed by Congress.

13

That the government shouldn't give American business too many breathing spells.

14

That Upton Sinclair is a gifted statesman and will be of vital assistance in ending production in America.

15

That Franklin Delano Roosevelt can't help smiling.

16

That the best government can be achieved by a crew of tinkers ambitiously patching the various parts of the social structure, provided they work independently, with indifferent tools, and according to conflicting principles of craftsmanship; and that the resulting cacophony of economic flats, agrarian diminuendos, and industrial discords can be symphonized into a grand concert by such contrabasses of political oratory as General Farley.

17

That the Brain Trust has brains and can be trusted.

18

That all who attack the New Deal should be suppressed permanently because the current situation is a national emergency.

19

That Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau may not be very bright, but that his father is a financial genius.

20

That the report that Thomas Jefferson has turned over in his grave twice weekly since March 4, 1932, is a foul canard.

21

That it is much more important to finance Warm Springs, Georgia, than it is to finance the United States of America.

22

That President Roosevelt's sons know how to drive automobiles.

23

That the prominent Democrats who have deserted Cabinet offices and other high positions in the Administration returned to private life because they were sick or broke, but not because they could no longer stomach the New Deal.

24

That the full-dress suit worn by Al Smith at the Liberty League Dinner was bought and paid for by J. P. Morgan.

25

That the frankfurter is God's greatest gift to man.

26

That Harry Hopkins spends \$48,000,000 before breakfast each morning instead of doing setting-up exercises.

27

That it is too bad William E. Borah wasn't born a Democrat.

28

That Dr. Wirt was wrong.

29

That Democratic members of the last Congress passed the Administration's legislation with dizzy speed, not because they were sandbagged by threats of curtailed patronage, but because they believed in the merits of the bills before them.

30

That Henry A. Wallace is the greatest Secretary of Agriculture since the last greatest Secretary of Agriculture.

31

That every time Thomas S. Lamont asks John W. Davis for the correct time he gets a bill for \$75,000.

32

That a President who had controlled Congress body and soul for three years was powerless to prevent passage of the Bonus.

33

That crop reduction is well served by sending farmers to Alaska to open up new lands.

34

That Norman Thomas is a reactionary because he refuses to merge the Socialist Party with the New Deal.

35

That the almost instantaneous spurt in business when the Supreme Court declared NRA unconstitutional is difficult to explain, but that the demise of NRA had nothing whatever to do with it.

36

That the imprisonment of a citizen for buying undated potatoes is a noble, and therefore unassailable, instance of the New Jurisprudence.

37

That the SEC will not accomplish its purpose until it has strangled finance and turned the New York Stock Exchange Building into a rest home for indigent WPA officials.

38

That what this country needs is a good fifty-billion-dollar deficit.

39

That the Justices of the Supreme Court are all over 100 years of age and pass their spare time matching twenty-dollar gold pieces supplied in case lots by Andrew Mellon.

40

That the last thing a public utility official does at night, before retiring to his platinum-lined boudoir, is to raise the consumer's rates one more notch.

41

That all solvent American citizens are Wall Street speculators and should be imprisoned at once.

42

That Alfred E. Smith's political convictions are contrary to Democratic doctrines, but that Rexford Guy Tugwell's collectivist ideas are 100 per cent orthodox.

43

That the share-cropper who was forced on relief by the Cotton Control Act regains his self-respect with a WPA privy-building job.

44

That the New Deal ideology is not communistic, but that even if it were, it would be better for the country than a Republican administration.

45

That Dr. Townsend is a sincere idealist, but a little ahead of his time.

46

That if fifty-one per cent of the nation's voters can be got onto the federal payroll, the New Deal will become perpetual.

47

That George Washington was all right because he plowed under a cherry tree.

48

That the various gabby females prominently identified with the New Deal ac-

usually dislike publicity and are forced onto the front pages and before microphones against their will.

49

That to pay fifty dollars a plate and wear evening clothes to a Jackson Day Dinner attended by a Mr. Roosevelt (D., N. Y.) is to be a high-minded patriot, but that to pay five dollars a plate and wear evening clothes to a Liberty League Dinner attended by a Mr. Smith (D., N. Y.) is to be a predatory plutocrat.

50

That the Bill of Rights is out-moded and can be scrapped altogether as soon as the old Solid South creeps as far North as Philadelphia.

51

That the European nations welched on their war debts, but that the United States acted honorably when it repudiated its gold-bond clause.

52

That the booing one hears nowadays when the smiling Roosevelt face appears in newsreels is carried on by paid agents of the Ku Klux Klan.

53

That by planting two rows of trees from the Canadian border to the Mexican, a great step will be taken toward balancing the budget.

54

That all former American Presidents who were admittedly great men, regardless of Party, would support the New Deal if they were alive today.

55

That veteran Democratic senators refer

to *Der Führer* in private in the same terms with which they breathe his name in public.

56

That individual human liberty is old-fashioned and will never be missed once the More Abundant Life reaches full flower.

57

That, after all, there may be something to the Soviet scheme of liquidating the opposition.

58

That the sooner we realize the expressions "capitalist" and "public enemy" are synonymous, the better.

59

That every American business must be regulated by government supervisors twenty-four hours of the day.

60

That if the annoying people who are criticizing the New Deal would only shut their mouths, the country could be made over completely within three weeks.

61

That the Forgotten Man can now be definitely forgotten.

62

That civilization in the United States came to a dead stop on March 2, 1932.

63

That there can't be too many jobholders.

64

That although Mussolini is a cruel autocrat for oppressing the Ethiopians, he can't

be entirely evil, because his Corporation State owns seventy-five per cent of Italian business.

65

That if the railroads can be regulated a little further, they will finally collapse and then can be commandeered by the federal bureaucracy, lock, stock, and barrel.

66

That the labor unions have been taken in very smoothly by the New Deal and will not wake up until it is too late.

67

That America can never be prosperous until no one is rich.

68

That social security must be guaranteed to every indigent in the land because the federal government owes every citizen a living.

69

That it is too bad William Jennings Bryan wasn't elected to the Presidency in 1896 or the New Deal could have started then.

70

That President Roosevelt has only to smile during his newspaper conferences to mesmerize almost all the correspondents, the exceptions being those reporters who are in direct receipt of Wall Street gold.

71

That Cabinet officers and other high government officials can best be recruited from the ranks of the following unemployed: professors of cow-state colleges, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, amateur uplifters, social service workers, disqualified clergy-

men, broken-down Single Taxers, ex-Anti-Saloon League clerks, former Prohibition agents, lady beauticians, veterinarians, osteopaths, and gold-brick salesmen who have found cash customers for the Brooklyn Bridge.

72

That the purchasing power of the American dollar, come 1937, will still be 59¢ worth of votes and 41¢ worth of baloney.

73

That honesty, decency, and statesmanship must be rooted out of American public life once and for all.

74

That any allegation of federal censorship of free speech over the radio is a gross libel, but that if attacks on the New Deal continue there is no telling what will happen.

75

That a political platform does not mean what it says and so should be plowed under.

76

That a New Deal jobholder who digs into the Federal Treasury for \$10,000 a year is a patriot, but that a New Deal critic who earns the same amount by the sweat of his brow is a "creature of entrenched greed".

77

That the most thrilling proletarian document since the Communist Manifesto was the President's address to Congress on the State of the Union, in which he declared the American Class-War.

78

That wealth may be augmented and equitably distributed by failing to produce it or by actually destroying it, and that a non-existent hog is better for a starving farmhand than the fumes of roast pig in the oven of his share-cropping employer.

79

That the NRA was the most nearly perfect piece of legislation ever voted by Congress, only it didn't go far enough.

80

That if Thomas Jefferson were alive today he would approve the New Deal's setting class against class because he was an agrarian revolutionist himself.

81

That inflation can't happen here because it happened in Germany, a land of Huns.

82

That the doctrine of States' Rights, formerly subscribed to by the Democratic Party, is obsolete today because under it the number of federal jobholders is necessarily limited.

83

That every American citizen who has survived the last three years with his savings account intact should be taxed unmercifully to support all those who haven't savings accounts and never will have them.

84

That the way to re-employ ten million unemployed is to raise prices so high that the consumer cannot purchase.

85

That if the rich can be soaked with enough taxes there won't be any rich

people left and then the poor will feel better.

86

That the Civil Service Commission, by placing a premium on literacy, is a menace to patronage, and therefore should be abolished.

87

That Rexford Guy Tugwell sacrificed a great career to work for the government.

88

That the American farmer has been helped considerably by the importation of hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of food stuffs necessitated by New Deal crop-control legislation.

89

That the best way to pay old debts is by contracting new and larger ones.

90

That a belief in the doctrines of Karl Marx and an aversion to manual labor entitle the possessor to free meals at the expense of the government.

91

That Henry Morgenthau has discovered the philosopher's stone, whereby Treasury paper, exchangeable for more Treasury paper, may be transmuted into riches by printing magic words on it.

92

That a correlated political philosophy is a handicap to governmental virtuosity, and hence the New Dealer is free to try all roads and by-alleys of endeavor, including the left, the right, and the south due north; the ultimate destination being left to chance, political expediency, electoral patience, and the Supreme Court.

93

That entrenched bureaucracy is somehow vastly different from entrenched greed.

94

That any citizen who has a job, saves money, and pays his honest debts is *ipso facto* a reactionary.

95

That the Federal Treasury is an inexhaustible horn of abundance, whose broad end should remain in Washington, where it is used as a pork barrel, while the narrow neck oozes out largesse into the various states, serving, at the same time, as a vacuum cleaner of efficient taxation.

96

That a Harvard law student, after listening to three lectures by Felix Frankfurter,

knows more about the law than the nine judges of the Supreme Court.

97

That the true and lawful title to all money is vested in those who have not earned it, and to all property in those who do not own it.

98

That all the people can be fooled all the time.

99

That \$5,000,000,000 can buy a national election.

100

And that Franklin Delano Roosevelt, running on a platform commending him for the successful execution of the ideas heretofore catalogued, will be re-elected next November by the largest plurality in the history of the Republic.



FOR A SPINSTER

(*Dying of Cancer of the Breast*)

BY SARA HENDERSON HAY

ALACK, what irony is this.
 Surely a harsh and bitter jest
 That one inviolate so long
 Should come at length to such a lover.
 Here was a very maiden breast,
 A heart no passion might discover,
 Whom Death has done a cruel wrong,
 Betrayed unto a brutal kiss.
 Dishonored now and given over,
 Finally, shamefully possessed.

BUSH BRIGADES AND BLACKAMOORS

BY LAURENCE STALLINGS

Addis Ababa

THE Capital of Ethiopia sits upon the saddle of a mountain, in a situation of surpassing equatorial beauty. It is more filthy than the houseboat colonies of Hong Kong, and has less color than the Negro section of an Alabama canebrake town. Too much has been written of it. Suffice to say it is a squalid collection of mudhuts housing one hundred thousand syphilitic niggers, ruled by a thousand black-and-tan Jack-the-Rippers.

Negus Neghusti

The King of Kings is a little warm brown man with flop ears and a receding chin which he masks in a luxuriant black beard. He sits *cafard* in his eyrie, a barny palace profusely decorated with silver-framed portraits of the English royal family, a living triumph of British diplomacy in Africa. He sits with great dignity back of a long French table, unruffled and smooth—quiet, Oriental, with wonderful dark eyes, black pupils framed in malarial whites. He has poisoned, stabbed, shot, and fought his way to his kingship; and now, when Birnam Wood has started moving down his alley, this jitney Macbeth must regret bitterly his failure to do business with the Italians.

Class-War

Ethiopia is partitioned into marvelous provinces, each barely connected by Am-

harra conquerors with other component parts. The Amharras are for the most part ginger-cake people, appearing far more Semitic than Hamitic. They resemble, the best of them, the type of colored denizens in New York City where Negro Harlem meets the Jewish Bronx. I dislike the Amharras with a great intensity; though this can hardly be due to sheer racial hatred. I admire the Somalis, those truculent and savage shepherds and warriors who people the deserts—the husk of Ethiopia. They are a Semitic people, more Arabian than not, with of course strong streams of Negroid in them. The Arabs, who speak with contempt of the Ethiopians as “The Mixed Ones” (The Bastards), share with all the Near East a hatred and distrust of Ethiopian character.

The bulk of the Ethiopians are Gallas. They are the great fighters, the true Moslems of the country. There must be eight or ten millions of them. A scientist would call them a non-Bantu Hamitic people. To me, they are most near the Southern Negro, and a people of the same wonderful patience, the same quick courage. They filtered into Ethiopia in the fifteenth century, coming from Kenya and other equatorial countries. They have been conquered by the Amharras in the past fifty years, just as have the Somalis and other subject races. The Emperor, an Amharra, is fighting his war with his serfs, the Gallas. There are dozens of small minorities. One such is the Danakails, a people who

perhaps are nearer to the ancient Egyptians than any others living. Of course all are in thralldom, though in many places they cannot yet tolerate the sight of their conquerors.

Thanks mainly to the propaganda of the British, we are supposed to think of the Ethiopian officials as ministers of war, state, etc., but this is sheer poppycock, as any journalist will tell you. It is better to think of them in their true titles. The chief official is a *Dejasmaj*, or keeper of the center gate. His second-in-command is a *Grazmaj*, or Right-wing leader. He is, as a man of the Right, chief of police and protector of private property such as horses, dogs, children of *gabars* (slaves), etc. The least of the three majors is the *Kenjasmaj*, or Left-wing leader. Then there is one other title to be understood. That is the *Fita-wrari*—that nigger more truculent than the rest who, from the Emperor's bounty, has been awarded the land and slaves of the outlying villages. His title literally means Rhinoceros Horn and he is the Roland who, in the pass, may wind his horn for aid.

These four titles are all needed to understand Ethiopia, which is the last great slave state of the world, and which has not a Chinaman's chance to survive the next twenty years of history.

Chercher

No act of a European power ever gave so much pleasure to the African as the bombing of Adowa conferred upon the Galla peasants of the Chercher province. This fine long range of mountain meadows and upland pastures belongs partly to Tekla Hawariat. Naturally only his caste may wear rifles, for the Gallas are subject to the Amharra dynasty. . . . There is a valley in the Chercher where men no longer go; for Menelik razed it in the be-

ginning of the present century, and there are said to be forty thousand ghosts there, looking for their heads. . . . The Gallas, however, after the bombing of Adowa, were given rifles.

The Gallas still boast of their king hidden somewhere among the Moslem secrets of the Chercher, and now he has many armed warriors. The Emperor, having armed them, can look to his laurels once the present European difficulties are settled out of court. A Galla peasant with a new Mauser is a man to avoid.

Some of the rifles issued them were not new, which accounted for the figure, sprawled in the road one morning, of an Amharra soldier. Evidently he, as a member of the elect, had owned a new Mauser. He now lay on his back, an old Lebel fusil by him. He had been a very tall man, and the Galla who killed him had carried away proof of his stature, having carefully removed a strip from lower lip to groin. The Amharra sprawled in the road, still faintly pumping away his heart's blood, right where the clay road wound towards the Chercher province.

When Tekla Hawariat returned from Geneva, he brought his two small sons with him. They were tiny children, *chic* in Parisian togs; for the French have great skill in dressing under-sized children. The old warrior looked with great gusto upon his country, but the little pickaninnies stared at a homeland they had heard of, but had never seen. The railway stops were alive with unkempt and frowsy horrors.

Haramaich

There will never be a finer setting for a village than that one which lies just beyond the pass into Harrar province. A punchbowl of equatorial mountains rolls a green rim 10,000 feet towards high and

stately cumulus clouds, themselves picked out of a miraculous African blue. At 6000 feet the floor of the valley is fifty miles across. Settling in the exact center is a lake which, on its sheet of glass, faithfully reproduces the scene.

By the lake still remain a few Harrari, fled there to evade the Emperor's colonizing forces. Harrar was theirs; then became General Makonnen's by right of conquest. The latter gave it to his son, who is Haile Selassie. It was all over with Harrar province then, for the accursed Amharras moved in to enslave these gay people. Even the brothels are now an Amharra monopoly, only women of the Emperor's caste being permitted to hang the Crusader's red cross and white tabard before their doors. Every avenue for the acquisition of silver belongs to the King of Kings in Harrar province now.

So thoroughly is the province his that an English diplomat has recently written: "His being King of Kings is only further mark of his high sacrifice; for, possessed of large estates, he might retire to his own Harrar and there lead the agricultural life of a country gentleman. . . ." (Sir Roger de Coverley, after Sunday morning prayers, dropping down to the segregated district to count Saturday night's takings.)

The only children who seemed to lead a childish life of games and dreamy pleasures were beside that lake; I saw no such others in all Ethiopia. They did not even resent the harsh chatter of a motorcycle which sent their small flocks flying; rather they were rejoicing, it seemed to me, that they might go dashing naked across the broad meadows in pursuit, tunics trailing on the wind behind their necks. Though money meant nothing to them, silver piastres with Menelik's head (he severed the heads of some twenty thousand once as a disciplinary measure) were pretty, shining things.

When the Aurussi troops poured through Haramaieh in November they killed and castrated three shepherds. The *Fita-wrari* of the province then flogged twelve of them, giving each thirty lashes with a rhinoceros whip. Some of us were unluckily caught in the radio station in Harrar town and forced to remain there while the flogging went on in the compound. The only plumbing in Harrar province I saw that day — a little spout which squirted water into the flogged man's face after each blow. One of the Aurussis survived the flogging — at least, a surgeon said it seemed as though the fellow might.

The murder of their fathers did not dim the gaiety of these children by the little lake. Even though they had seen those dreadful red patches in the sun, they still greeted me (they flying after bolting donkeys and sheep) with "Denas Stelling, *Gue-tah* . . . Good morrow to you, Master."

Dream Prince

The Prince Ismail Daout is brother-in-law to the King of Egypt, and head of a Red Cross mission in Ethiopia. Naturally the Prince wanted his outfit, which he financed himself, to go from Addis Ababa towards the Northern front. He had organized his units for mule caravan from Dessie onwards. But Haile Selassie cuts all the cards. He did not want the Prince Ismail Daout to be so near Egypt, where he might communicate military intelligence to his people; so he sent him to Harrar, where his mules would be useless.

The Prince wore clothes like an Englishman, and he had a monocle, a manner, and dress boots. I liked best his habit of kicking Amharras in the groin. (The kick is not an offensive weapon in Ethiopia, for the foot is not considered a part of the human body, but a mere appendage of mud upon which the body stands.) I saw the

Prince Ismail Daout fork an unfortunate Amharra three feet in the air while the Egyptian Red Cross doctors beamed at the vigor of their chief. It was the Prince's first careless rupture at Dire Dawa, and caused a sensation, Greeks who had been cadged for whisky by Amharras since time immemorial running to doorways with ill-concealed smiles, Red Cross doctors standing at proud attention.

The Frenchman who is the chief of Amharra special police there (a special group of *embusqués*, lesser fry Amharras too unimportant to get cushy jobs in the safety of Red Cross signs) arrived in full blue, looking like John Philip Sousa. There was a colloquy, after which the Prince extended his hand and the Amharra, coiled on the ground like a snail, reluctantly gave his free hand in return. The incident was closed.

I did not see His Royal Highness kick anyone again until he had secured the Duke of Harrar's palace for headquarters. Here, during the excitement of moving in, one of the Egyptian pharmacists accidentally ate a tin of potted chicken which was among the Prince's personal effects. There was never such a demonstration of kicking. The doctors formed a line and the Prince set out to make a record. He kicked fore and aft for fifteen minutes, sat and had a bottle of iced Chianti, and then resumed. The pharmacist knew a thing or two about the game, and guarded his groin with remarkable celerity throughout the first session. The Prince got his guard down in the second, however, and soon reduced the man to unconsciousness.

"You may think me," said the Prince, puffing, "a bit highhanded, my dear fellow." I didn't say what I thought. The Prince polished his monocle. "I not only must be a medical missionary," he said, "but a disciplinarian as well." The Prince spoke

excellent English, and looked forward, as an Egyptian, to cementing the bonds of friendship between his country and Ethiopia.

Harrar Town

At Harrar, according to the celebrated Doctor Ferron of the French mission, the population has the finest syphilis average in Ethiopia, batting a cool 100 per cent. Also, smallpox is endemic, and sufferers are escorted to the town wall and kicked out. Leprosy is rather common, and elephantiasis even more so. But I saw very little trachoma.

The striking thing about Harrar is the chains. The town is a cluster of chains. In three months' residence there I never ceased wishing that the English ruled Harrar, kicking out the Amharras and giving the old town an opportunity to be itself. Arthur Rimbaud was a merchant there, on its green hillside sloping down to the divine Valley of the Fanfan. But that was long before the little brown man at Addis Ababa decided to uplift it as his very own.

Afwerk

Doubtless the world has learned of poor Afwerk's death at Gorahai, which guards the gateway of the Webi Schebelli. These forts were erected early in August under direction of the Turkish adviser, Wehib Pasha. Of hewn rock, they dominated the only high ground for miles around, overlooking the baked brush of the Ogaden Desert, guarding the morass of the water course which leads to the heart of the Harrar and Chercher provinces, and into Dire Dawa, the railway capital of the empire. Afwerk was the *Grazmaj*, or Right-wing leader, of Shoa. And the Shoaan dynasty of black-and-tan Amharras now rules the unhappy lands of the Abyssinians.

Afwerk had been a slave to these Am-

harras. He was not longish and effeminate, like the natives, but a roundhead, a bullet-skulled black Negro, stocky, brave, and true. He had won, too, a smattering of European lore about modern firearms, being well-coached by the Swedes and the Belgians in their schools. These schools, primarily to create bodyguards for the overlords of the plateau, taught a Plattsburgh course to the gentry. Afwerk, coming and going from Harrar to Jijiga, was instantly impressive as a man of parts. He had a fine hatred of whites. I last saw him on the day when, at last, he had secured ten camion loads of barbed wire and two cases of English gasmasks of the old-fashioned, box-respirator type. He was all happy determination then.

Being assigned command of the rock forts at Gorahai, where the old Pasha had persuaded Haile Selassie's Brain-Truster, Nasibu, that the starch must be taken out of the Italian *askaris*, Afwerk with his newfound lore, his ancient courage, his fine intelligence, knew that he held a post which would bring him to grips with the Italians. He must have carried, in his personal retainership, a motley of wives, slaves, riflemen, bed-boys, priests, and whores to the number of eighteen hundred of all rank; or, in the Ethiopian sense of organization, a full brigade. They were, in a way of speaking, his own, parasites upon his economic body, chattels of his medieval demesne. There were also at Gorahai some eight hundred regulars, men in full khaki kit who could salute, do squads rightabout, erect shelter tents, and, if given plenty of time, stack arms.

Afwerk had little brief for these latter. He had a contempt for European civilization which included the gist of it — the armed man with a thousand years of poetry and science in his mind. Afwerk set up his own personal suite of machine guns back

of these regulars, and when the day came that they were soundly bombed and (quite sensibly I think) fled to the bushes, Afwerk shot them down with unfailing grim humor, meanwhile his own people standing their ground. (Should an Ethiopian "Great" elect to stand and forbid the sea to roll in upon him, his personal family, large or small, would stand with him.)

Afwerk, major general, thus died at Gorahai, manning a cheap Belgian machine gun, firing at aeroplanes which were dipping at 6000 feet to cast off the crudest sort of high explosive bombs, round barrels of fragmented steel with fulminate detonators at either end. Many died with him. Some who did not die were the *Fita-urari*, or vanguardist, Saumo, and one hundred and fifty regulars. In the midst of the grief over Afwerk's death — I was privately warned by the Governor of Harrar that, should I attempt to attend memorial services in Afwerk's honor, the government would not be responsible for a white man's safety — the Emperor flew to Jijiga and there disciplined the regulars who had run from air attack. The punishment was typically Ethiopian. Each of the hundred and fifty men received thirty lashes, which meant a lingering death from septic cuts after a month's suffering. Saumo himself received forty lashes, carefully breached through the whipping so that his final punishment would be the slow entrance of a bayonet into the place where Haile Selassie informed the tormentors that they could stick it. The Emperor, unperturbed through this ordeal, even forbade Dr. Robert Hockman, later killed, from putting Saumo out of his misery.

Croix Rouge

The poor Ethiops were a long time understanding the significance of the Red

Cross. In the first place, the Red Cross was wished upon the commanders by Haile Selassie, who had finally made up his mind that he must, sooner or later, admit these mercy-mongering Franks into the country — though they were as welcome as a Y. M. C. A. secretary would be in a Canuck lumber-town after a trapper's winter.

Once the Amharras got it into their heads that aeroplanes would not fire upon Red Crosses (such is their blissful ignorance of World War history), they took it up with great enthusiasm. It became a home for *embusqués*; and Dr. Hockman told me that, whenever his post at Dagga Burgh sighted Italian planes, the Red Cross tents became a bevy of brass-hats.

No Amharra will give up his arms; and it became a nuisance to find the best armed of the peers bristling with guns, daggers, pistols, and cartridges, and with large Red Cross brassards on their arms. As the Red Cross then contained the gentry, and the gentry could afford alcoholic spirits (or drink the medical stores), they were always offensive. Some of us grew tired of having bayonets in our faces and black rascals screaming "Halt!" whenever an accursed white man passed near a Red Cross dump at night. So we disarmed them one afternoon in my only enjoyable day in Ethiopia.

It was wonderful after that to walk by the Red Cross doorway and observe the Amharras equipped with quarter-staves. They were quite forlorn, the only blackguards in Ethiopia without firearms.

Mitrailleuse Noire

I spent an unlovely day trying to photograph an Ethiopian machine-gunner's eyes while the gun was firing. He shut them tightly during the firing, and opened them after the clip was finished. I never could prove the fact on film. The gun made such

a clatter that, when one crawled beneath its deafening barrel, the vibration inevitably set-off the camera shutter.

The gunner was a fine fellow, a Galla. He had never been so near a white man before, and he trembled. I gave him a pack of cigarettes, and for days afterwards he always waved a high hand to me. It was in a place where every one disliked whites; and the simple act of that gunner flinging high his arm always made me feel quite secure. I hope he gets through this show all right. When they attempt to take his gun away I hope he manages to keep it. When the tax-gatherer calls to take half his goats . . . well, I hope he will have learned by then to keep his eyes open, with the bull's-eye on top of the front sight, and front sight squarely in the middle of the tax-gatherer.

Thralls

It's no good saying one dislikes a race. The Gallas, which constitute most of Ethiopia and which are an abjectly subject race now, are as cruel as any set of men. History records that they came from central Africa 500 years ago, bringing with them many cruel practices. Even so, I never saw a troop of Gallas I did not instantly like. No matter how Europe cuts the cake, they will survive. The French had begun fair ranches in the Aurussi country before this recent difficulty; and several planters — fled to haven in Djibouti — spoke of them as good farmers, loyal and brave.

The Belgians who trained the riflemen always spoke of them with warmth; and two of us worked a week with them, filming them on the road which spurs off Harar towards the Chercher. It was hard work for all of us, but they were infinitely patient, and very proud of their new rifles. . . . Their women are the handsomest in Ethiopia. They seem to be the only women

of the plateau who have a sense of color, winding coffee berries and pepper strings into their buttered hair, and walking with an Athenian pride of bearing. The Gallas alone of the Ethiopians know how to smile.

Somalia

The King (*Hadji*) of the Somalis is talking:

We Somalis are a great race for we are great travelers and liars, and too, we are good fighters; and these are the three functions of a true man: that he has traveled, can lie well as to what he has seen, and can whip the man who questions his stories. . . . I regret the present difficulty, for the Italians are no people to govern us and bring us their lore. No, not even the French, I think, are up to it; though personally I should not mind French domination. Personally, I should like our people to have a country called Somalia; and when we needed help we could hire the British *raj* to put us right again. This is a war country, *Sahib*. I do not admire Haile Selassie; he is a timid scholar, and not a great savage bulk like Menelik. Unless we receive help in Ethiopia, the Italians will have us. Did you know that I can write English fairly well?

Dejasmaj

General Nasibu is the Governor of Harar province, and the Emperor's viceroy. It is natural that he should be the chief of staff of the Southern front. He is a very able man, tall and finely-featured, and he suffers from a syphilitic ear. (Once, to illustrate the appearance of some explosive in a dud bomb, he produced a tube of neosalvarsan to explain its color.) Nasibu has a good record as a guerilla fighter. He was with the Emperor when Haile Selassie overthrew Lidj Jasu, the former Emperor, by suddenly producing three French military planes and bombing the legitimist troops into flight. Nasibu himself cleaned up the desert spearmen of the Danakails and Is-

sans with his own Belgian-made machine guns.

I liked Nasibu best of all Ethiopians; because he was rude, cynical, and a man of parts. When finally he went with Wehib Pasha to new headquarters at Jijiga, where I could not go, I missed him heartily. The only time he was polite to me was when he wanted someone to unscrew the fulminate cap from a dud bomb. It was the only time I was ever rude to him. I had practiced for days the best way to accent that opening line . . . "*S'il vous plait, Votre Excellence, je vous prie . . .*"

Nasibu was no slouch for discipline; he seemed to have kept half of Harar in chains. A New Dealer, a deputy for the Negus, he did not spare the cat-o'-nine-tails. The Italians will do well to buy him up; but it is my belief he will be of excellent service to the English, when they get their slice of Ethiopia. Nasibu knows, in that finely-molded skull of his, that England understands more about colonial administration than all the rest of Europe put together.

Dire Dawa

The French actually control Ethiopia from Dire Dawa in to the Somaliland border. The village is much like an orange town above Redlands in California. At 4000 feet its acrid desert air, its bungalows draped in Bougainvillaea, its sleepiness, seem to provoke a halcyon gusto in all men coming down from the high plateau after months immured in Addis Ababa.

The French moved two hundred colonial marines into the railway town and fortified the compound. The Emperor gave them spirited opposition, but the French moved in. Among ten million shiftless Negroes for so many months, witnessing their filth and bestiality, I always enjoyed visits to the French officers there. The lit-

the compound was an essay in the art of fortification; for the French have a genius in the use of earth, whether they grow tomatoes under glass, or entrench a position. Each time I came through Dire Dawa I could see new fire steps, banquettes, chevaux-de-frise.

The *Grazmaj* of Dire Dawa called weekly, protesting that the *tirailleurs* had no right to fortify their position. (In a country where children of ten trail loaded rifles, and murder is the only serious profession!) The *Grazmaj* never succeeded in provoking the captain of the French, a St. Cyr man of cool, unruffled mien which masked a prime humor. "Oh," I heard the captain say to the *Grazmaj* *Tafara* after that plump ginger-cake gent had stood aghast at the sight of a fine concrete platform enabling four Hotchkiss guns to enfilade the boulevard. "*C'est une terrasse . . . pour les aperitifs.*"

Coptic Lice

One saw little of the Coptic Church. The buildings were shacks, the singing mere caterwauling (the choir needed a bass from the Christian music of the Gregorian chants or the chords of Johann Sebastian Bach to write spirituals), and the priests a set of thick-set villainous rogues served by *gabars* kept in savage thrall. Occasionally one tried to photograph in churchyards and was thrown out for his pains.

Once in the gray dawn of Bolalakos' coffee room in Dire Dawa, I met the Abbé Habema, and followed him by train to Addis Ababa. I wondered if he were going to ask permission to poison Lidj Jasu, the former Emperor who sat cutting out paper dolls in a house near Harrar; I gave him the benefit of the doubt and decided that he was rushing to Addis to save Lidj Jasu's life. When I returned to Dire Dawa I met Lidj Worku Gobonya, a gentleman, and

the Governor of Issa province. (Of course Lidj Worku could not reside in his province; for, as an Issan chief said: "I hope, *Sahib*, the Italians beat the Gallas"; for he did not even know of the existence of the Galla masters, the Amharras, and believed the Gallas the dominant race of Ethiopia.) Lidj Worku's father was many years the Finger-Man for Haile Selassie; and he was responsible for Lidj Jasu's person. I asked Lidj Worku: "Tell me, is Lidj Jasu alive or dead?"

"Please don't ask me such a question," he said gently.

A month later I found a copy of *Time* magazine which reported that Lidj Jasu, ex-Emperor of Ethiopia, was *kaput*. Furthermore, said *Time*, Ras Hailu, another of the Emperor's rivals, had been immured on an island in Sidamo. I had the feeling, however, that Ras Hailu had been murdered along with Lidj Jasu. Poisoning need not be a fine art in Ethiopia. Once a month the priest administers *kosso* tea for tapeworm sufferers among the raw-meat eaters. The holy men have regular rates.

French Influence

A traveler leaving Ethiopia via the port of Djibouti is not impressed by that sandy little seaport's motley. Hotels are run by Greeks, presumably because no Frenchman could survive the squeeze. Viewed from the air the situation is one of beauty: a radiation of boulevards from the common center of the Place Menelik, the blue of Tadjoura Gulf encircling the town. Old King Rhigas, the patriarch of the town, now kibitzes the backgammon game; and being the patriarch will not permit a misplay. When he considers a player to have made a mistake (which is quite possible in a temperature of 130 degrees, in an atmosphere so house-fly laden as to turn the landscape black), he insists upon corrections.

Old Man Rhigas was among the first to settle at Obock, the original port of French Somaliland; and while there he was friendly with Arthur Rimbaud, who sensibly deserted Parisian studios to become a merchant of sorts in Harrar. He rarely mentioned Rimbaud; though I tried to make him speak of that distraught genius. He could remember vaguely when Rimbaud was ill of a cancerous knee, and tradition says the old man paid his fare to Marseilles where he died of his malady. Rhigas sometimes recited from Verlaine.

Recently the great brothel syndicate of the Near East made heroic efforts to open, at Djibouti, a decent tropical emporium for the sale of white women's favors. The contact man was a huge Breton who, in white tennis shoes and toothpick, spent hours in the Hotel Europe with an Italian

secret service man. As a test case—either to show the possibility of maintaining decorum, or the ability to pay promptly the authorities who must look the other way—two French women were imported from Saigon. They were installed in an Arab house beyond the salt works.

When I saw the ladies they were very fatigued, but still genteel. They had just serviced the two destroyers in the harbor, and were pallid from their week-end of heroic exertion. A month later, they had furnished ten rooms with call bells and maintained a downstairs bar presided over by a married couple. Beer was iced; there were some potted plants, and three *sous-officiers* of French *tirailleurs* were playing excellent pingpong on the roof.

Thus does the white man's civilization come to the East.



PANTHER IN THE MIND

BY JOHN HOLMES

THE panther in my mind asleep
 Has lain a long time quiet there,
 An easy prisoner to keep.
 He breathes the dark and flowing air
 Unhurried, effortless, and deep.
 I can remember when his tread
 Wore out a track across the cage,
 From side to side, uncomfited
 In grief and love and groping rage.
 So mute and bitter his despair,
 His teeth were at my heart like fire,
 Until the valiance in my flesh
 Was burned away and turned to ash.
 But when at last I level pride,
 A wasted wall, a useless thing,
 And bend the bars of reason wide,
 The beast will spring.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

Who Will Pay the Bill?

THERE are signs that our glorious political summer is over, and that the winter of our discontent is here. In other words, the bills are beginning to come in. The dance has lagged, and the piper is passing the hat. People have suddenly become aware of several things that they should have foreseen three years ago. First, that the lunatic gyrations of the New Deal have run into money, and must be paid for. Second, that there is nowhere for the money to come from but out of taxes. These are important lessons. We seem to have been going on the assumption that the wizardry at Washington and in our state capitals either costs nothing or can be paid for with some kind of stage money; but it now appears that this is not so.

Presently we shall discover another disconcerting fact, which is that just as there is nowhere for the money to come from but out of taxes, so there is nowhere for the taxes to come from but out of production. People get money to pay taxes by producing and exchanging goods or services; there is no other way. This process is what we describe by the general term "business". People can get tax-money only by doing business. Now, obviously, there is a limit to the weight of taxation that business will stand, because if taxes eat up so much of the income of business as to make it not worth while to go on, production stops, and the economic structure of the nation breaks down, as it did at Rome in the third century. Therefore the fourth dis-

covery which we are on our way to making is whether the load of American taxation has reached that point, and if not, how far off that point it is.

Facing these four facts is disagreeable, but there they are. The morning after the night before is always a bad time, but it always comes, and there is not much to be done about it; so let us look around a little and see if we can make out where we are. According to a report made to the Merchants' Association of New York, the federal government collected sixty-seven different taxes last year, by 131 separate levies. The total sum came to \$3,299,435,572, of which nearly half represented indirect or concealed taxes—concealed not only in the price of commodities that can be classified as luxury products, like gasoline, tobacco, perfumes, and cosmetics, but also in the price of such necessities as sugar, cotton, wheat, pork, matches, soap, and certain drugs. The report observes that no one, not even the poorest of those now living on Relief funds, can escape the incidence of at least eight federal taxes; while more than thirty taxes are imposed on every wage-earner in the income-tax group. As an instance of multiple or cumulative taxation, where levies are piled on top of levies, the report states that the tax on spirits, wine, and beer is imposed in nineteen different forms. Yet notwithstanding all this, the federal government is running so far ahead of its income that Treasury figures forecast a deficit of five billion dollars in 1937, and an increase in the national

debt which will bring it to a total of \$36,000,000,000.

So much for that. Turning now to the record of the State of New York, we find that the president of the State Economic Council has declared that although twenty-two different kinds of state taxes were in force last year, they came short by \$97,000,000 in meeting the state's expenditures. Since 1907, these expenditures have risen from \$32,000,000 to \$311,000,000; while in the same period the state debt has risen from \$12,000,000 to more than \$677,000,000. Meanwhile, the state's municipalities have acquired an aggregate debt of \$3,200,000,000, and some of them are in very bad financial shape. In one of these municipalities, the largest one, New York City, the politicians have actually got down to the level of filching pennies from its citizens by a niggling little sales tax. One would hardly have expected our grandchildren to live long enough to see anything like that.

These few figures give a suggestion of the weight which the aggregate of local, state, and federal debt puts on production — because, I repeat, all these debts must be met out of taxes, and taxes must come out of production. The question therefore arises whether production can carry the load. If it can not, then clearly the United States is no longer a going concern. Some think it can not. The New York State Chamber of Commerce, evidently impressed by the sight of banks stuffed full of federal bonds that no one will buy, gave warning two months ago that something has to be done very quickly to avert such an impairment of the national credit as will bring about a financial collapse; and as long ago as last October a lawyer of my acquaintance who manages large estates replied austerely to a suggestion that he should put some of a client's money

into government bonds: "It has always been my fixed policy never to invest in the securities of an insolvent corporation."

Some, however, think the situation can be tided over by confiscatory taxation on large incomes and accumulations of wealth, a policy commonly known as Soaking the Rich. Those who have this idea base it on the theory that taxation should be measured by the ability to pay, which is the most unjust, unsound, and anti-social theory of taxation ever devised. But aside from this, as every collectivist is well and truly aware, soaking the rich is the surest way, under our present economic system, to knock production into a cocked hat. Moreover, the rich have not that much money — nowhere near that much. As the report to the New York State Chamber of Commerce observes, if the whole income of those who in 1934 earned a net of \$6000 or more were confiscated outright, it would not meet the federal deficit; and it must be remembered that it is the same persons who on this theory must also be soaked for state and local deficits.

Others, again, think that if these debts are safely passed on to posterity, production will take care of them in time. So it may; yet certain factors enter into the case which this view does not take into account — for instance, the voracity of politicians. There is no reason to suppose that any future batch of these gentry will be more eager to see good money go to pay debts than those who are with us now. They will prefer to apply it to their own purposes; otherwise why should they be politicians? The principle which ex-Senator Smoot formulated, and which has been ironically termed "Smoot's law of government", should not be lost sight of in this connection. It is that "the cost of government tends to increase annually, no matter which party is in power". A pro-

gram of retrenchment sufficient to vacate this principle even temporarily is hardly to be counted upon. Nor is it certain that production will hold up to a degree necessary to carry our national credit over the interim; and it is still more uncertain that with an increasing perspective on the kind of conduct which has involved us in these obligations, posterity will regard them as casually as we do. It may; but the chance that it will is not so overwhelming as to amount to certainty, or anything like it, especially in view of the probability that incomes between \$1000 and \$5000, or less, will do the actual paying.

As a rule, hopeful persons who believe that we are still solvent, that things are not so black as they are painted, and that our public accounts will somehow get themselves straightened out in the long run — such persons, I say, as a rule take a rather shallow view of the causes at work in the situation. They think that now the only thing necessary, or at least the main thing, is to beat Roosevelt, just as four years ago the main thing was to beat Hoover. But this does not get us much. Beat Mr. Roosevelt, by all means, but what shall we get by it? When we beat Mr. Hoover, what we needed was a policy of strict economy, retrenchment, and reform, and did we get it? Not so that any one would notice it. More than ever we need that policy now, and shall we get it by beating Mr. Roosevelt? I believe some modern men of science do not flatly deny that miracles sometimes happen, but if this one happened it would settle that long-disputed question forever.

There are cogent reasons why it will not happen. Some of them will occur at once to anybody, and they are competent enough as far as they go, but they do not go far. Among those that reach nearer the root of the matter there is one that I wish

to mention, both because it accounts for so much and because I believe it is seldom thought of. I refer to the utterly useless and preposterous overbuilding of our political structure.

Look at it. First we have a highly-centralized federal unit giving berths to an enormous number of employees, I do not know how many; the last statement I saw put the figure at 815,000, which is probably not far wrong. Then within the federal unit we have forty-eight subsidiary units, each with a full political apparatus and personnel, executive, legislative, and judicial. Then within each of these units we have any number of counties, each with a political apparatus of its own; and within each county we have a mess of townships, boroughs, school-districts, villages, municipalities, wards, each with some kind of political organization. Thus a citizen may live, and quite regularly does live, under six or seven overlapping political jurisdictions, most of which have power to tax him.

This seems stupid and useless enough, but what I wish to point out is the viciousness of the thing. This arrangement opens innumerable opportunities for people who are good for nothing else to go into politics for a livelihood. Under it, every country cross-road offers a chance for some worthless fellow to prey upon production, and, as we see, every one of these overlapping political units can show its quota of predatory local politicians. Moreover, in order to keep a grip on his job, whatever it is, or to get a better one — to boost himself from ward-leadership to a mayoralty, from the lower house of Congress to the upper, or from wherever he is to wherever he wants to go — he forms around him a sort of junta, made up chiefly of people as worthless as himself, but to some degree gifted, like himself, with the peculiar type

of low sagacity, the instinct for the main chance, which is the principal element that makes for success in the politics of a modern republic. He is bound to this junta by various obligations of *quid pro quo*; he has to "look after the boys", and accommodate himself to their interests and desires, and particularly to their several designs upon the public purse. For his purposes, too, the larger the junta the better, and therefore its tendency is to grow; and as it grows in size, it grows also in power, and as it grows in power, its field for the exercise of unscrupulousness becomes larger and richer. The patronage-junta of the White House is simply an enlarged replica of Tammany's junta; and Tammany's junta is an enlarged replica of the junta surrounding every congressman, sheriff, and alderman in the land.

Thus the overbuilding of our political structure invites unconscionable swarms of vermin to nest in it and eat out our substance. In view of this fact, my impression is that unless and until that overbuilding is reduced—and we all know that this is impossible—Smoot's law will hold, and our public finances will be in little better shape than they are. Beating Roosevelt, while no doubt commendable, is not enough to encourage a great rise of hopefulness. It rather reminds one of our old-style crusades to drive streetwalkers out of town; they could be driven out, and were, but the trouble was always that their place was almost immediately taken by others precisely like them, and so in the end the crusade broke down. As long as our political accommodations are so exclusively and elaborately designed for one type of inhabitant, it seems vain to expect any other to occupy them.

Yet the uselessness of all this overbuilding must be as apparent as its viciousness. If we are to have a federal government as

highly centralized as ours is now, why keep up a complete political apparatus in the forty-eight major components? I notice that some one has already proposed to do away with their political character, and merge them into ten "economic" provinces; but why not rather let their present boundaries remain as an agreeable concession to local sentiment, like the old French provinces, and also as a convenience in addressing letters? On the other hand, if we are to decentralize into an actual federation of sovereign states, why keep up such an expensive establishment at Washington when the Senate Office Building would amply house every legitimate activity of such a federation? We are bound to be either one thing or the other—we can not be both—so why not cut the coat of our political apparatus by our actual cloth?

Again, what earthly use are counties, except to support jobholders? I know of none. I can understand the use of townships and city wards under a system like the one contemplated by Mr. Jefferson, which proposes to lodge all sovereignty exclusively in these units; but under any other system they seem wholly useless except, again, for maintaining a set of beings who might well be cast adrift. Also, why keep up an apparatus of partisan political government in a municipality? Some of our cities have in fact already discarded it, and from all one hears no great benefits seem to have been lost to the non-jobholding public.

Probably it is not necessary to say that I am not offering these observations as serious proposals, or expecting that they will be taken as such by any one. Vermin do not evict themselves, but on the contrary, they dig in and breed; and the matters I have been discussing are in the hands of those whom the structural changes I

have mentioned would dispossess, which is the best of reasons why these changes will not be effected, and why any serious discussion of them at all would be mere futility.

All I have been attempting to do is to assemble a certain amount of evidence—

by no means complete, but I think enough — that the country's financial condition is not to be regarded superficially, and that those who count on its improvement by the usual course of superficial or symptomatic treatment stand a fair chance of being disappointed.



THE BIRDS

BY REUEL DENNEY

I CAN imagine when the grass has grown
Between the switches in the cut beside the mill
And the slag is covered with the mullein and the
Hook of the crane feeds rust to the griping vine,

All over the sky the smoke no longer travels,
The seasonal flocks that dot the evenings
Will soar the winds with similar compulsions
As press them now, buoyed on still changeless wings.

But circling not remembering, those fliers that descend
Out of a cloudy sky will hardly know the difference
Between a house that's new and a house that's ruinous,
Since all a bird needs at the last is a perch out of the wind.

When the couplings are cracked, when the wheel is finally stalled,
When cylinders are corroded in their grooves and wires fall,
And boxcars rot and the factory walls break inward
And the trees walk back and make the squares a mall,

The eagle will take the smokestack and the wren the eaves
And the hummingbirds will fly the foundry's galleries
And at the entrance of the shaft will be the swift.
The robins will nest everywhere where now there are no trees.

I can imagine when men under the wheel and the drivewheel
Have gone at last with touch no longer magical,
City emptied of us whose trains no longer run,
The sky will be darkened by those wings that are automatic and unintellectual.

THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNIST

BY DAVID ALLAN ROSS

EVER since the New Deal dawned on a believing and bewildered America, the communist movement has enjoyed its own More Abundant Life. The kept idealists, frustrated intellectuals, back-room debaters, and parlor messiahs have been encouraged to discuss, envisage, and demand many benefits that are as impossible in practice as they are in theory. As a result, the whole country has been entertained with a vast number of public disorders, each a manifestation of this recently stimulated yen for a New Utopia. Hardly a city or town has escaped the gaudy spectacle of picket lines, mob demonstrations, eviction riots, street brawls, protest parades, curbstone imbroglios, and similar antics. In most of these the hand of the professional communist has been discernible; indeed, the Comrades have been quick to grab the credit and the publicity, operating under the old adage that anyone who gets on Page One is *ipso facto* a person of considerable importance.

But who is the crusader responsible for these civic pageants and tableaux? Is he the intellectual radical, the accomplished propagandist, the college-bred messiah whose remarkably efficient organization and indefatigable industry are at present exerting such a marked influence on public affairs? Not at all. Rather, it is the leg-men of communism, the stooges, the heelers, who do the dirty work and keep the ball rolling. These are the eternal adoles-

cents, male and female, who shuffle in picket lines, boycott movie palaces, contrive gutter scuffles, bait the cops, wave the Red flag, chant the *Internationale*, toss stink-bombs, and in general comport themselves as have all public nuisances since the dawn of time. The more adult citizens of the Republic are cognizant of these obstreperous crusaders, and have, at one time or another, seen them in action. But how many persons comprehend their real nature, understand their actual purpose? What do they look like at close range? How do they talk, think, live, act, and where do they breed? Who, in short, are these heelers of communism?

Recently, THE AMERICAN MERCURY commissioned me to find out; and I have devoted considerable time to the assignment. I went to the habitat of the communist underling, lived with him, listened to his oratory, read his pabulum, ate with him, attended his meetings, his concerts, his amusements, and in general was one with him. As a result, I have been able to construct the following composite portrait of the professional heeler. The picture is as fair and unbiased as I can make it. And it is the simple truth.

II

This typical heeler, to begin at the beginning, was born of sturdy peasant parents who, towards the end of the last century, emigrated from Central Europe and set-

tled on a small farm in the eastern United States where, by working hard and long, they were able to acquire a modest share of material possessions which in Europe would have been considered luxuries far beyond the expectations of their station in life. Among these luxuries was the opportunity to send their son to school; and so it was with vast pride that they saw him initiated into those mysteries of Education which had been denied them by the poverty of their own youth. Fortunately for their peace of mind, the parents could not envisage the results of introducing entirely new and heady theories into a brain hardly prepared for them by centuries of traditional ignorance and repression.

For the lad—let us call him Karl—spent his school-days learning that America was a great Democracy wherein all were born free and equal; that it was the richest country in the world and boasted the highest living standards; that every citizen had an equal right to a share in these riches; that the government belonged to him as one of the people; and that there were no class distinctions whatsoever. These lush ideas, tossed at him with little or no explanation, were bewildering. They were new, revolutionary. By the time Karl was ready to leave school he had arrived at his own interpretation of democracy. It was this: America owed him a living.

Returning to the farm, Karl was at a loss to know why his parents continued their arduous labor in the fields. For himself, he did not like farm work. It was too hard; the hours were too long and the rewards smaller than should be expected in the Land of Opportunity. He concluded that his father and mother, deprived of the benefits of education, were fools. And having heard that in the Big City, working hours were short, wages high, and chances for easy diversion plentiful, he

went forth to claim his American heritage; in other words, to get his cut of the wealth. Having little of the intrinsic moral integrity which sustains the normal man, Karl, when he got a job in the city, was amazed and pained to discover that the hours were not as short as he had expected, that the pay was insufficient to provide him with the luxuries he felt he deserved. As a final injustice, he was actually expected to work while on the job.

Naturally, he soon found a number of ways of getting by with minimum effort, and felt pleased to think that he was putting something over on the Boss. But this was not enough. For he also discovered that he was being Exploited; he learned that not only must he work for a living, but that his employer would Profit by his Labor. Here was a maladjustment so great, so glaring, and so savagely unjust that it aroused the bitterest resentment. Was this, he paused frequently to inquire, Social Justice, that he should work forty hours a week for a paltry \$30 while his employer sat in an easy chair doing nothing at all except run the business and collect the Profits? The Profits of Karl's Honest Toil? He began to move among his fellow employees, complaining of his lot, grumbling, looking for trouble. And shortly, he found it. He was fired.

Brooding upon what he had learned since he spread his wings, Karl concluded that he had been double-crossed. The Bosses had put one over on him. They had taught him that America was the Land of the Free, the land of wealth and unparalleled opportunity for all; and then they had tried to make him work for a living. As he wandered around the city, sampling this and that job in an effort to find one that was all pay and no work, he saw plenty of evidence that other people had wealth. It seemed to him that every-

one else had a car, a radio, a country cottage, a mistress, and similar concomitants of prosperity, while he had nothing. As he pondered this, his resentment grew and festered to bitterness. With the feeling that someone had pulled a fast one on him, he began to hate America with a fierce vindictiveness, and he dreamed of revenging himself some day upon a Society that so complacently denied him his adopted birthright. At this point, he discovered communism and the Communist Party. He embraced the one and joined the other.

III

It is a misconception to suppose that American communism, as currently practiced, is a politico-economic theory of government. With its childish illogic and florid emotional appeal, it bears closer resemblance to a primitive religious cult. It is a refuge for the frustrated, a delusion of the defeated, the supposed opiate of the proletariat. It promises to the weak and spineless a paradise on earth by the simple device of inverting the entire social set-up. Its basic principle is that if the weak and spineless can get together, there will be enough of them to achieve the inversion by sheer weight of numbers. A United Front of Morons, as it were. Its ultimate dream is the Second Coming of the Russian Revolution, here in the United States. *Der Tag* is awaited fanatically by a multitude of pop-eyed believers.

Thus Karl's first real pleasure came when he discovered that he did not stand alone in his resentment and self-pity. There existed a whole tribe of his fellows, male and female, who had raised self-commiseration to a point of extraordinary efficiency, and made a profession of it. Karl discovered a *fata morgana* of the discontented, a fairy-land wherein every em-

ployer was a loathsome wretch, everyone who earned an honest living a gullible Wage-Slave, while all who were disgruntled and anti-social assumed heroic proportions and were garnished with tinsel halos. It was an Alice-Through-The-Looking-Glass-Land, an upside-down place where impossibilities became entrancingly possible, where abysmal stupidities wore the aspect of sublime wisdom, where contradictions were magically reconciled and harmonized, where fables became facts. Karl swallowed communism eagerly, seeing in it the perfect weapon with which he might in time revenge himself upon the Bosses, and an instrument for his own personal aggrandizement. In this spirit, and with the encouragement of the other heelers, he became preoccupied with day-dreams of the time when he could loot Wall Street and rape Park Avenue, thus achieving economic and social advancement at a single swoop.

But unhappily, a certain degree of disillusion followed the first exuberance of his introduction to the Cult. For Karl came to realize presently that the Revolution was not quite as imminent as he had at first been led to believe. Though he heard a great deal about the Unrest of the Masses, and gathered that a large proportion of the American population was prepared at any moment to spring at the throats of the Bosses, he discovered, whenever he ventured into the everyday world, a certain stolidity, an irritating, gum-chewing complaisance which suggested that the time was not yet ripe for the World Revolt. Hurt by this, he withdrew himself wholly within the circle of professional communism where he could hear nothing he did not want to hear. Henceforth he lived, slept, ate, drank, talked, and breathed communism to the complete exclusion of everything else, nurturing his hatred of

America and all things American to vindictive heights, and developing a yearning, neurotic adoration for Soviet Russia—that happy land where everyone works and everyone is equal, since nobody has anything. Karl considered a country where everyone worked an extremely pleasing prospect indeed—when seen from the safe distance of 6000 miles. He was a great believer in work—for others. His own role he pictured as that of a Leader of Causes, in a purely Executive Capacity.

Now a full-blown communist heeler, Karl is of course on Relief. (He has managed thus far to avoid taking a Relief job because the WPA does not pay union wages, and no good Comrade would sabotage union pay scales by working for lower rates.) But his Relief check, he feels, is disgustingly small, and often he has to stand in line to get it. This he considers merely another example of the utter perfidy of the Capitalist Government, and so he occupies himself, while waiting, by distributing Revolutionary Literature along the line.

He relishes, however, the more congenial aspects of his lazy life. True, he lives in a shabby room, but he is able to occupy himself exclusively with communist affairs. He has acquired a faintly Bohemian aspect, and considers himself an Intellectual. He knows, and uses at every opportunity, all the big-sounding phrases and mumbo-jumbo of his creed, talking endlessly about United Fronts, Solidarity, Class Warfare, Race Discrimination, Collectivism, Regimentation, and Dialectic Materialism. He is not sure what all these things mean, but they sound important. He reads the journals of the Movement religiously, accepting everything without question. He swallows voraciously the *Daily Worker's* excursions into infantile fury, hysterical hatred, and the tantrums of frustration. He laps up

eagerly the most transparently absurd distortions, shoddy contradictions, and bland ignoring of the truth in the *New Masses*.

For there are neither moderations nor exceptions in the heeler's cosmos. There are only two colors, black and white. And, as in all fairy tales, there are only three permissible characters; the good Fairy, the Ogre, and the long-suffering Hero. The Fairy is impeccable. The Ogre stinks. The Hero, who is of course the Worker, is a Martyr with a halo that casts a pleasant pink effulgence upon his noble countenance. Every employer is a loathsome reptile. Policemen are vicious thugs whose chief occupation is smashing the skulls of old women and jumping on babies—proletarian babies. Pickets, hunger-marchers, and demonstrators, on the other hands, are at all time models of self-controlled deportment even when they are being goaded by the Cossacks, who itch to indulge their sadistic natures by cracking proletarian pates.

Every evening Karl gathers with his Comrades at the chosen cafeteria or lunchroom and sits around discussing the events of the day as interpreted by the *Daily Worker*. He reads, also, the little pamphlets published by The Workers Library Publishers, with such titles as *The Program of the Communist International*, *State and Revolution*, *An American Farmer Sees the Soviet Union*, *How Can We Share the Wealth?* and *Foundations of Leninism*. While Karl is not able to understand this stuff, his reading does give him a pleasing sense of being frightfully learned and thoroughly *au fait* with the affairs of the Proletariat. His New Learning causes him to rush constantly around in a lather, shrieking, shaking his fists, and banging frantically on a tin can in a highly spectacular, though ineffective, manner. In common with all the Com-

rades, and particularly with those who write books and magazines, Karl is sublimely indifferent to facts. He has an astonishing capacity for swallowing the most apparent contradictions, the most flagrant lies, the most amazing distortions. As a worshipper of Russia, he whoops with joy over every occurrence in that happy land, and snarls with impotent fury over everything that happens in America. You will find him in his favorite cafeteria some evening about midnight, singing a fervent paean of praise for that marvelous, that superb, that typically Russian and altogether magnificent and glorious thing, the Stakhanov Speed-Up System, under which the Soviet government attempts to double and treble industrial production. Yet ten minutes later he will be baring his teeth and clawing at his cruller in savage fury over the speed-up system which the cruel Capitalist Taskmasters have introduced in America. He will picket a freighter about to sail with a cargo of scrap iron for "Mussolini's Capitalistic War", at the same time sublimely ignoring the fact that Soviet Russia is shipping oil and war materials to Italian ports through her back door at Odessa as fast as she can. If you bring such contradictions to his attention, Karl will dismiss them as Capitalist Propaganda.

As an Intellectual (he has contributed several letters to the *Daily Worker*, addressed "Comrade Editor", and is an ardent disciple of the Mike Gold School of Literature), Karl is interested in the Arts, chiefly those having a bright red tinge. He loves nothing more than a good lusty piece of Propaganda on the stage, in a short story or novel, in a movie, or at a dance recital. He applauds everything the Comrades do with enormous enthusiasm but little discrimination, and likes his sentiments meaty and lurid, and his language ungrammatically Proletarian. His

ideal hero is a colorfully articulate truck-driver with fifteen starving children and a penchant for slugging Irish cops.

At a moment's notice, Karl can get wildly excited over anything at all. His interests are world-wide, so that within the space of an hour he can work up a splendid lather over at least a dozen divergent Causes, from Hoboken to China. He has become acutely race-conscious. At least once a day he drops a few tears for the Jews in Germany, the Negroes in Alabama, the Chinese in Manchukuo, the peons in Mexico, and the poor Ethiopians. But he has rather curious ways of showing his burning affection for his brothers in misfortune. He will cheerfully donate a nickel to a Fund to send a publicity-hungry lawyer to Alabama to defend some Negro, and is sublimely indifferent to the fact that any Northern lawyer who makes a point of commenting sarcastically upon Southern ideas of Justice does much to insure the conviction of the prisoner he is defending. This is hard on the victim, of course, but it is fine communism.

Again, Karl will exercise himself almost to apoplexy over a labor dispute in the Middle West, and will contribute oral support towards sending out an Agitprop heeler with a bale of communistic literature. There will be an enormous amount of talk about a United Labor Front. But the unfortunate strikers ultimately awaken to discover that they have been adopted, and their strike taken over, by the Communist Party, the members of which know little about and care less for the real needs of American Labor, being interested exclusively in stirring up dissension between employer and employee, in order to advance their own Cause, which feeds on confusion and misunderstanding. Every other worker in the territory will be urged to strike in sympathy. The usual rabble-

rousing tactics are employed, and every possible effort made to brand the whole affair Made in USSR. The net result is that the local people, originally sympathetic to the aims of the strikers, will become antagonized. The strikers will discover that, instead of an ordinary dispute between themselves and their employers, they have got involved in something they neither understand nor want, called Class War. The strike will fail because in the general confusion, propagandizing, and rioting, the original cause of the strike is forgotten. And when the Comrades pack up and go home, satisfied that they have caused as much trouble as possible, they will leave the original strikers much worse off than ever before.

To the outside observer all this may seem futile and silly. But it is good fun, and it is a great source of satisfaction to the Comrades to know that they have been as annoying as possible. Karl feels that if he is doing nothing else, he is making himself thoroughly objectionable to those he hates—the Bosses and the Bourgeois. He has included the Bourgeois in his list of hates by this time because they consistently decline to get excited over his yowlings. He hates them, too, because they are the backbone of the country, and he has an understandable distrust of backbone.

IV

It is not to be supposed, however, that Karl spends all his time in such serious occupations. He has his diversions. There are plenty of girls among the heelers. Most of them are homely, drab, neurotic, full of strange yearnings and half-baked ideas, possessed of a terrible urge to Do Something Cosmic. For some reason, most of the girls one meets in this queer never-never land are short and dumpy, just as

most of the men are thin and anemic. One wonders at times whence come the models used in their literature and posters to depict typical Comrades. One so often sees pictures of splendidly built, lusty, attractive men and women with broad smiles and white teeth, but one never by any chance sees such specimens in the flesh. Short fat girls who waddle, thin men who slouch—one sees hundreds of these, slumped over cafeteria tables, drinking endless cups of coffee and smoking innumerable cigarettes. Their mode of living is semi-bohemian, and it is notable that their innumerable activities never include any sort of athletic activities.

Karl rarely sees the day until it is half-spent, when he drags himself reluctantly from the rumpled bed he has neglected to make for the past week, and glances sourly at the bathroom with the comforting reflection that bathing is a stupid Bourgeois habit. After brewing a pot of coffee, he enjoys a hearty stretch, scratches himself, and dresses. In the summer he wears rumpled slacks and a polo shirt—and his hair needs cutting. In the winter he adds a sweater and a baggy overcoat—and his hair needs cutting still more. He looks rather like a college sophomore gone to the devil. Then he sets out on what Party work he has chosen for this bright and merry day. Perhaps he joins a Picket Line—there is always a strike somewhere that needs a little stirring up, discontent in the garment center, dissension between building owners and elevator operators, a PWA project to annoy, almost anything. Or he may enjoy a parade, or a fight with the cops, perhaps even a night in jail in order to burnish his Martyr complex. He may even gain a little wholesome intellectual stimulus by listening to a *New Masses* Symposium, or he may attend a debate to be held by the Bourgeois fools up-

town, and liven it with a little robust heckling. If he needs some spare change, he can sell the *Daily Worker* in the subway or on a street corner. And by way of humorous diversion, he can go downtown to a department-store picket line and chain himself to a lamp post. This always draws a crowd—and a few lines in the dirty Capitalist Press.

And there is always some new Organization to be joined. Karl is already a staunch supporter of such outfits as the International Labor Defense, several branches of the International Workers Order, the Group Culture Society, the American League Against War and Fascism, and the Friends of the Soviet Union. But in case he feels that this is not enough, he can join the Young Communist League, which issues amusing literature for school-age readers; or the Social Dancing Group (which teaches pingpong and the “Proletarian Tango”), the Professional Workers Anti-Fascist Club, the National Negro Congress, the Thomas Jefferson Branch A. W. F., the American Friends of Chinese People, the Medical Committee for Defense of Ethiopia, or any of a hundred similar organizations.

No matter what Karl does at night, his chief business will consist of talking, unless he has some such work on hand as helping to organize a dance to raise funds for the Anti-Fascist League—in which case he talks twice as much and hopes that someone else will do the work. No one ever does, but if the dance is scheduled to start at 9 o'clock, the Committee will arrive at 9:30 and fix things up somehow. Every five minutes people go around with baskets demanding contributions to a Fund. One wonders whether these affairs are not exclusively devices for gathering the Comrades together so that they may be efficiently mulcted. At intervals during

the proceedings someone gets up on a platform and makes a long incoherent speech, concluding with a fervid appeal for funds. What all these Causes really are, who sponsors them, and where the money goes, no one seems to know. Between collections, Karl shuffles around on the floor in a thoroughly Bourgeois manner.

One of the outstanding characteristics of communist affairs is their depressing mediocrity and sloppiness, never concealed under the enormous pretentiousness with which the heelers invest everything to which they turn a hand. For it must not be forgotten that no matter what a professional communist does or how he does it, it is always the most important, the most outstanding, the most cosmically significant event of all time. A forum of Comrades discussing such a question as “Militant Propaganda Against War” will carry on with the strangest mixture of confusion, pretension, and gravity; yet the speeches, the questions, and the answers will hardly be worthy of a grammar-school debating society, and the meeting will invariably trail off into a heated argument about something that has nothing to do with the subject, concluding in a general uproar with everyone shouting at once and no one listening. Even the main addresses, presumably prepared beforehand, are resoundingly trivial.

Karl will talk incessantly about everything under the sun, though communist themes have preference, particularly the Revolution, since it is the Nirvana of his Cult. He can only conceive of progress in terms of violent physical action, for he has no comprehension of practical economics and sociology, and regards the machine gun as the only answer to opposition. To his mind nothing is important unless it is spectacular. Social evolution and progress may surge under his very

nose, but he will fail to observe it unless it is accompanied by shrieks of agony, seas of blood, piles of corpses, explosions, and burning buildings. Physical combat is of course a powerful aphrodisiac — no doubt most of the wenches in the Movement cherish secret dreams of standing half-naked on a Barricade, waving the red flag midst shot and shell.

As for food, Karl takes it where he finds it, helped upon occasion by a few dollars for leg-work done in distributing Party leaflets, selling newspapers, helping to organize — within his comprehension of the term — a symposium, or ushering at a concert. For the rest, it is rather hard scratching. Often in a restaurant a group of heelers will sit up half the night over a cup of coffee and a hamburger sandwich, waiting for some more prosperous Comrade to drop in and pay the check. This seems rather a precarious *modus vivendi*, but it is much better than working for a living, and it helps Karl to prepare for that important part of what he is pleased to term the Social Program, to be put into effect immediately after the Revolution — the New Lethargy.

V

There are, it is to be supposed, times when Karl really has his spiritual moments. Days when, under the stimulus of some emotion, he believes in his Cause as a Cause; when communism seems a beautiful and an inspiring thing. Most of the time, however, he regards communism essentially as something that will give him a chance to be one of the Ins instead of one of the Outs. He will rant by the hour about a United Front of classes, creeds, and colors. He will shed copious tears over the sad state of the Southern Negro, the Pennsylvania miner, the Mississippi share-cropper,

and he will appeal to them most touchingly to support him and his Creed because, so he asserts, that is the only way they can ever hope to be happy, and the only way to lick the Bosses, the Landlords, and the Bankers. Yet Karl rarely has any personal sympathy for these people or a real comprehension of their problems. His appeals are simply a device whereby he hopes to enlist the support of the working classes to aid him in carrying out his cherished dream of up-ending the economic system so that he will be on top instead of at the bottom. He trades on misfortune, feeds on confusion, and does his best to foment distrust and hatred.

Thus Karl exists in a happy daze, always meddling, interfering, always enormously busy doing something colossally unimportant. He is forever dropping one thing to pick up another with shrieks of joy, only to drop it just as quickly in its turn; noisy, quarrelsome, childish, vindictive, and futile, he is an acute case of mental and moral indigestion, a pathetic and unhappy spectacle of frustration. Rudyard Kipling could have had the communist heelers in mind when he wrote his hymn to the monkeys, *Road-Song of the Bandar-Log*:

Here we sit in a branchy row,
Thinking of beautiful things we know;
Dreaming of deeds that we mean to do,
All complete in a minute or two —
Something noble and grand and good,
Won by merely wishing we could.

Now we're going to — never mind.

Brother, thy tail hangs down behind!

All the talk we have ever heard
Uttered by bat or beast or bird —
Hide or fin or scale or feather —
Jabber it quickly and all together!
Excellent! Wonderful! Once again!
Now we are talking just like men.

Let's pretend we are — never mind.

Brother, thy tail hangs down behind!

YOUTH FACES THE SEX PROBLEM

BY CONSTANCE CASSADY

FOR some time now the youth of America has been attempting to answer certain questions of its own. Confronted with the deflation of many ancient values in the face of financial uncertainty and social unrest, yet still forced to conform at least outwardly to the folkways of the past, young men and women are finding themselves torn between two loyalties—the morality of their parents and the urgent demands of life in a modern world. Although it is only in the higher brackets of intelligence that one finds young persons inquiring into the broader aspects of the sex problem, there is reason to believe that the lower the individual's status in the socio-economic scale, the sharper his need to reconcile his personal necessity with some sort of social sanction. An outstanding example is the fact that marriage today is economically impossible for thousands of persons of marriageable age, whereas nature's overwhelming obsession for reproduction has not abated accordingly.

The girl and boy of eighteen, even when they have received the most conscientious sex-instruction at the hands of their parents, are all too apt, these days, to look about them with observant eyes upon a world in which the simple biological facts are woefully inadequate. They are discovering, in many instances, that life is not so beautifully ordered as the oldsters would have them believe—that it is not simply a matter of growing up to the age

of twenty-five or so, and falling in love with the “right person”, and getting married. The adolescent, even without the artificial stimuli of the movies and current literature, finds himself preoccupied with sex to a disconcerting degree, and (despite the pronouncements of scoutmasters and athletic directors) it is doubtful that even a grueling afternoon at sports will use up the energy generated by the sex hunger of a healthy young man. On the contrary, it would seem that the youth whose body is vigorous and in perfect condition, would be, by all laws of biological selection, preeminently fit for mating. The idea of diverting this vitality into “less dangerous” channels is actually an evasion of a major issue, and may result in psychological disturbances. It is apparent that, notwithstanding the scattered exponents of the New Liberty on the one side and the right-thinkers and moral fuss-budgets on the other, the great bulk of American youth still suffers from the sense of sin. This consciousness of wrong-doing, this aversion to all things sexual—the contribution of early Christianity to human ethics—has probably been the cause of more emotional instability and mental torture in youth than all other disturbing elements combined.

It will perhaps be conceded, by any but the most rigid moralist, that continence beyond the age of nineteen or twenty is definitely unnatural. The question, then, is whether sexual freedom before marriage

is sufficiently imperative to warrant its being accepted in place of the purity hitherto upheld as the standard for youth. There is much to be said on both sides.

The exponents of sex freedom point out, with sound logic, the glaring defects in the present system of morality—a system which, however weakened it may have become in the years since the World War, is still in effect, to all appearances. Granted, for instance, that continence is a physical and psychological strain upon any normal young human being, the inference is that, if it is to exist at all, it must be imposed through training or by the superior strength of authority. Up to the present time, the entire weight of public opinion, of religion and education, of the whole machinery of Society, has been toward the maintenance of chastity. Every element of a complex civilization, with the exception of the admittedly lawless, has conspired to this end.

So strong has been the tradition that even prostitutes in their mellower moments have been known to extol the benefits of virtue, while seasoned roués would suffer torture rather than mar the dewy beauty of an acknowledged virgin. Red-blooded cowboys weep unashamed over the sagas of wronged Nells, and toughened hillbillies pale at the mere mention of womanhood despoiled, and reach for their rifles. Virtue is rampant in even such supposedly iniquitous centers as New York and Chicago. More sentiment has been expended on the subject of youthful purity (feminine) than on any other popular legend, with the possible exceptions of Home and Mother. Yet this lush attitude toward sex, which has long since become an integral part of the folkmind of America, while it may have contributed greatly to the gaiety of nations, is possessed of serious consequences.

Putting aside for the moment the more obvious absurdities which have accumulated about the whole subject of youthful continence, the inequalities and contradictions of the present system must be apparent even to its most vociferous supporters. It is all very well to mouth such high-sounding abstractions as Purity and Virtue, but certainly no one attempts seriously to impose them upon young men. Society, even under the Good Queen, was quite willing to close one eye to the indiscretions of young gentlemen—so long as they indulged them outside their own class. Likewise, fathers of the present day who have heart-to-heart talks with their sons do not honestly expect the boys to remain virginal until they are mature enough to assume the responsibilities of marriage. In fact, they would be a little worried, not to say disappointed, if the situation were otherwise.

But when the demure daughter of the house receives her strict moral orders, the note of comedy is entirely absent. Here, the honor of the family is concerned: let there be no trace of levity. . . . Yet, oddly enough, a few outspoken persons have intimated of late that the female of the species is dominated by the same desires which harass her brother. Psychiatrists and other irreverent prophets, having at last penetrated the sacred precincts of the boudoir, announce that the maiden is also prey to the biological urge, and that the only reason she has been immaculate for so many centuries is because everyone else has insisted on it. It appears that, while sentimental males have been extolling her purity, and slaying other males who cast slurs upon her fair name, she has been quite bored by the whole affair. If a strong-minded girl, she has undoubtedly been wishing they would stop all the fuss, and let her have a good time too.

In brief, it is doubtful whether a woman's chastity has ever held for her the importance which men persist in attaching to it — a contradictory state of affairs which must have resulted in a good deal of embarrassment, now and again.

Certainly in the past the whole of society has lined up against the defenseless virgin in order that her virtue might be preserved, willy-nilly. The church, in its earliest days, established purity as the one essential for women. They could steal, lie, cheat, beat their mothers, and bear false witness against their neighbors, so long as they came to the marriage bed intact. Saint Paul, whose aversion to women was notorious, struck the keynote for the policy of the church when he said: "It is better to marry than to burn."

So far as the average American girl is concerned, his choice still holds. The old cliché of "Better death than dishonor", despite its comic connotation today, is still so potent in practice that she would rather marry the first \$20-a-week clerk who excites her passion than endanger her soul or her social standing by following her biological instincts. Driven by her own sex-hunger as well as by his, and groping in a confusion of custom, sentimentality, and religious scruples, she holds out for a wedding ring at any cost. The result is another unsuccessful alliance between two persons who have nothing in common but youth and an inherent longing for sexual expression.

On the other hand, if the young couple had gratified their normal desires with ordinary contraceptive precautions, they might have shared a rather delightful experience, and also have saved themselves and others a great deal of trouble. They might, then, have waited until a more reasonable age to marry, and thus avoided cluttering the already crowded scene with

a number of unwanted offspring whom they could neither support decently nor train intelligently. But Society is vehemently against this procedure. Even if the young man can so far forget his traditional chivalry as to attempt to "have his way with her" — and it may be observed that he usually *does* make the attempt — the girl herself knows better than to surrender. Whatever his importunities, whatever the urging of her own nature, she knows that by submitting she will lose caste, not only in Society but in the eyes of her lover as well. Therefore, she assures him that she is not that kind of girl. Whereupon he promptly drools with dumb admiration, begs forgiveness for his own unfitness, and marries the girl — with all possible speed.

The material consequences of this unsound practice are all too patent. It is well-known that America, perhaps the only country in the world where Love Conquers All, has the highest divorce rate on earth, and likewise the greatest proportion of neurotic wives and disillusioned husbands. Unfortunately, so long as the bride is expected to bring nothing to marriage except a complete ignorance of sexual life, and so long as women pass on, one to another, the belief that compliance in the sexual act is nothing more than a distasteful concession to the brutal instincts of a husband and the necessity for propagation, there seems little possibility of a happier state of affairs. The basic immorality of a society which encourages this exchange of a purely physical chastity for economic security, and which fosters the hypocritical delusion that intercourse is agreeable only to the male, has no significance for those professional moralists who lay down the law. Their whole concern is to see that the woman comes to her husband a virgin, and lives with him as a chaste wife, regardless of the fact that the necessity for these

customs, which sprang from practical considerations having to do with inheritance of property through the paternal line, has been virtually nullified by modern contraceptives.

In spite of this weight of Society's authority, however, there can be no doubt that a number of young women have privately asserted their right to sexual equality in recent years. If proof were needed, the results of a recent questionnaire at one of the prominent women's colleges would be sufficient. A surprising percentage of the girls admitted that they were not virgins. (One hopes that none of these courageous young pioneers will have the ill fortune to fall in love with a gentleman of the old school, and see him led to the altar by some sweet girl who has obviously nothing but her stainless purity to recommend her.) The modern tendency is unquestionably toward a greater freedom for both men and women; yet one must not overlook the fact that the sexual emancipation of the present era is often the result of alcoholic stimulation, rather than of an intelligent attitude toward morality. The drinking bouts in which high-school and college students frequently indulge, and which result in promiscuous relations, must not be considered a step in the right direction. Indeed, the mere circumstance of alcohol being essential to sex expression might be regarded as an admission that those who require it are still enslaved by the ancient taboos—that, without an artificial means of overcoming inhibitions, they would still be dominated by the Puritan conscience of the race.

Now it is apparent, up to this point, that it would be preferable for the girl to have the same freedom for intelligent sex experience before marriage as that enjoyed by the young man. To say that wisdom is

the result of experience is an aphorism, yet there seems no reason why it should not apply to love as well as to any other field of activity. Not only would the young woman thus be enabled to postpone marriage until an age when she was psychologically fit for the responsibilities involved, and to make a more rational choice of a mate, but she would probably bring to the marriage relation itself a fuller measure of tolerance and a more mature vision. Moreover, even the young man is not completely unfettered under the prevailing system, for, while he may enjoy a certain bachelor freedom in his relations with women, he is thoroughly impregnated with the idea that the only girl worth marrying is the one who cannot be possessed otherwise. This code naturally precludes the possibility of his pre-marital sexual experiences possessing any real value. By the very inconsistencies of his own attitude toward women, he is destined to associate intimately only with those whom he considers unworthy of his affection or respect, and the opportunity for sharing a rich emotional experience with an equal is sacrificed for an insignificant physical alliance with an inferior.

II

Having marshaled the arguments in favor of sexual freedom, it is only reasonable to glance at the other side of the picture. Strangely enough, the opposition is not nearly so loquacious, except when speaking in large organized groups. Individually it stands silent, firmly entrenched behind custom and tradition. And yet there is something to be said upon the negative side. As noted above, the question resolves itself largely into freedom for unmarried women, as continence in men is tacitly accepted as being non-existent. It is not

only whether women shall have that freedom, but whether men shall *permit* them to have it, without the loss of prestige and respect which has for long been the price of feminine liberty.

One of the most effective obstacles to intelligent sexual equality is the divergent attitude of male and female toward the sex relation. As already observed, the traditional attitude of the American woman is based upon superstition and an artificial revulsion against sexual intercourse, save as an unpleasant adjunct to an otherwise respectable married life. But there are certain aspects of the matter which extend more deeply than this.

The average man realizes early in life—in fact, he seems instinctively to know—that an orgasm is an achievement which is not necessarily concerned with his affections in the least. (If this were not true, prostitution would long since have vanished from the earth.) He finds himself at an early age the prey of physical desire, and he promptly recognizes it as such, without recourse to romantic vaporings. Any presentable wench is a potential mistress; he is easily excited by the mere glimpse of a well-shaped leg, an excitement which involves his heart not at all. The reason for this is not only that man is by nature polygamous and a rake, but that woman is physically attractive, both in her bodily contours and in the artifice of her dress, while he is not.

On the other hand, it would be difficult to imagine a woman, not a nymphomaniac, becoming sexually excited by the mere sight of masculine beauty. While aggressiveness and physical strength may be attractive to certain types of women, it is unusual for one of them to succumb *consciously* to the appeal. Whereas the average man requires nothing more than an inviting figure or a kissable mouth to stim-

ulate his desire for possession, the average woman is not so easily ensnared. She does not cast a roving eye upon every chance male who comes her way, and permit herself to speculate upon his amatory accomplishments—not unless she is hopelessly past the age when love is likely to be offered her. It is almost impossible for her to regard sex in the purely physical sense which it holds for him. Sex attraction, for the female, must be based upon an appeal of personality; it must present a stronger challenge than the mere prospect of assuaging a bodily need. Fundamentally, it may be a biological reaction, but the woman will refuse this solution unless she is offered certain spiritual or sentimental compensations. The acceptance of sex on such wholly different bases, by men and women, must present a well-nigh insurmountable barrier to a true single standard of morality.

And, furthermore, there is the difficulty of overcoming the age-old attitude of men toward women. The irrationality of the masculine viewpoint is proverbial; its contradictory phases have already been discussed. Yet it stands as incontrovertible, and perhaps as deplorable, as any other human proclivity: man using all his powers of persuasion to drag woman off her pedestal, and at the same time preferring her on the eminence rather than on his own level. Even while his body cries out for her, his soul insists that she remain aloof. He feels the need to worship her as something higher than himself, even as he desires to possess her. Perhaps it is this very internal conflict which often, even against his reason, causes him to despise her, once she has descended from her heights to become his property. It may be that this is nothing more than additional proof of the adage that the unattainable is eternally the desirable—or that

man demands something a little more tangible than God. It may be an echo of the romanticism of the Middle Ages, or the asceticism of the early church. But whatever its source, it is there, coloring the opinions of men who would neither admit nor attempt to rationalize its existence. Its importance lies in the fact that, so long as it does exist, real freedom between the sexes is impossible.

Perhaps the only rational verdict in the case of sexual freedom against Society is an affirmative one with definite reservations. The essential element which demands recognition (and in which much of the present-day freedom would appear to have failed), is the fact that the importance of sexual emancipation lies in its psychological rather than in its physiological significance. There can be no value in promiscuity. A casual and experimental attitude toward the sex act not only fails to benefit the participants, but must eventually result in the obliteration of much that is finest in human relations. It must be recognized, too, that there will always be individuals to whom sex can have little

more than an animalistic meaning. To these, a freer society would make little difference.

But to the rest of humanity, and particularly to youth, it would seem the part of intelligence to open the doors to a healthier understanding between the sexes. If one could build the sexual contacts of youth upon honesty and mutual respect, rather than upon superstition, a splendid step would have been taken toward a more enlightened way of life. If, further, one could eliminate the present ignoble practice of bartering woman's virginity for the economic security of marriage, and could arrive at a civilized state of public opinion wherein virtue in its narrower sense would have no significance as compared to the more essential qualities of sincerity and straight thinking, there might evolve a common ground on which young men and young women could meet without hypocrisy or false premise, and to which they could contribute individually the best of their natures, in intelligence, in passion, and in imagination.



THE MIDDLE WEST RULES AMERICA

BY DUNCAN AIKMAN

THE political astrologists have been intimating for some months that the New Deal's fate next November will be decided in the Middle West. Only a capacious calculator could quarrel with their horoscopes. Mr. Roosevelt may carry more North Atlantic industrial states than any Republican just now can imagine, or his losses in the Confederacy may exceed any horrors yet upthrust in Mr. Farley's worst nightmares. But no coalition of the South and East will conceivably elect him. He must have the edge in the Middle West to win, and so must the Republicans. Somewhere between the Alleghenies and the Rockies, between the Canadian Border and the line of the Ohio and the Missouri Compromise, a few hundred thousand marginal voters—perhaps even less—will decide where we go from here.

There is nothing exceptional about the situation. The Middle West has always been the dark and bloody ground of the Republic's critical decisions. Jefferson rushed into the Louisiana Purchase to head off a secession of the Mississippi Valley outlands when there were barely half a million people beyond the mountains. Midwestern sectional politics threw the balances in favor of the War of 1812. Midwestern acquiescence gave the Southerners the balance of power to declare the Mexican War. The Middle West's support of Lincoln—a doubtful matter until Fort Sumter was fired on and never a quite unanimous support—solved the Civil War crisis. The Middle

West stopped Bryan in his tracks—at least for the first thirty-six years, as G.O.P. jibbers would have it. Prohibition did not become a serious national menace until its emotional epidemic invaded the Midlands, and it collapsed at the same time the Midlands turned convalescent.

There is far more than the geographical factor in this amazing power of political leverage. With the enormous variety of the Middle West's agricultural and industrial interests, it is seldom that an overwhelming sectional issue arises to sway votes. The questions of land settlement policies, of outlets to the oceans, and of military defense which troubled its brawling youth, have long been settled. The Midlands have no fixation on manufacturing tariffs, on cotton, on silver, or on the Japanese menace. In all these obvious matters of geographical self-interest they comprise, unquestionably, the least sectional of the sections. The Middle-Western electorate, in fact, shifts the gears of political decision for the nation almost wholly in accordance with the promptings of the Middle-Western mind and temperament. What can we learn about these imponderables which will help us guess the decisions of the future?

Whenever I go back to the Middle West, where I was born under Benjamin Harrison, the thing I am impressed with is the lack of regional obsessions. Southerners are obsessed with the "niggehs", cotton, social position, and their sentimental inheritance

(including Fundamentalist theology and the Lost Cause). Easterners — barring New Yorkers who are mainly concerned with local excitements — are obsessed with business and financial conditions, and, to a greater degree than is generally advertised, with the frictions between the original population and the foreign vote. Pacific Coast voters are obsessed with their various promotional schemes, regional and individual — including new religions and millennial political movements like Upton Sinclair's.

In the Middle West you find individuals with all these and a great many other obsessions, but none of them is dominant. In a New England manufacturing town a dozen eminent citizens will tell you they are against the Administration because look at the mills all shut down and the way taxes are going up, and look at the stock market. The disapproval is sincere and may even be ferocious, but it seldom varies. In the Middle West, however, when I meet a dozen earnest entrepreneurs whose loathing for the Roosevelt era is equally fervid, the chances are that before the evening is over they will be squabbling, not always amiably, over what they loathe it for.

Normally, the Middle Westerner meets several people each day with different obsessions about economic programs and social values, and it does something to his mental processes. He is a little less tempted than other brands of sectionalites, for instance, to believe that a crime against nature has been committed if the demand for his factory products falls off; or that chastity is undone if a mulatto runs sexually amuck in the next county. Unless his environment is exclusively parochial — a difficult arrangement in the Middle West of the 1930's — he may even escape the conviction that all right-minded people belong to the farm bloc. His obsessions, in other words, are less likely than in other regions

to be stiffened into dogma by group addictions and group-mindedness, and are regarded even by the Midlander himself, in his more philosophical moments, somewhat in the light of private whimsies.

In result, the Middle Westerner carries his basic prejudices relatively lightly, changes them with, on the whole, refreshing frequency, and keeps his mind fairly open to new ones. It is perfectly possible, for instance, for the same Hoosier to have been an "anti-imperialist" at the turn of the century, a Bull Mooser in its 'teens, a Klansman in the 'Twenties, a Technocrat and New Dealer in the 'Thirties, and God knows what brand of Townsendite in the 'Forties. Meanwhile our obsession-shifter's Southern contemporary has gone on being the same old romantic Negro-fearer that his grandfather was, while the New Englander has lived and died with his Protestant-banker's or Irish mill-hand's class-consciousness unsullied by a single inconsistency.

This seeming fickleness, far more than any conscious devotion to specific sectional interests, is what gives the Middle West the balance of power in American politics. East and South, political viewpoints are relatively static. The East reverses its normal Republican allegiances from time to time and even the South will prefer a great Black Republican engineer to Popery. But you nearly always know when these upsets are coming and you usually can see why. The Middle West, on the other hand, changes its mind, its principles, and even its prejudices in politics with what seems to the observer from stodgier political climates an almost wanton abandonment to temperamental impulses.

The confusion, I suspect, is due to the outlander's inability to see what the Middle Westerner's true obsession is. It runs so much deeper than obvious sectional inter-

ests and issues that to a New Englander it is virtually incomprehensible, while it is almost equally outside the emotional orbit of Southerners. What really conditions the Middle Westerner's political reactions is the value he puts on personality.

II

Midlands conversation reeks as much of persons as talk in the ranching states once reeked of cows. Your dining car companion in Iowa tells you the peccadillos of his business career and why his sister-in-law can't eat bananas, with humorous philosophy, perhaps, but with an abandonment of reticence that would appall a New Hampshire family's Thanksgiving reunion. I listened one night last summer to three middle-aged women who had just previously struck up an acquaintance in a Hoosier resort hotel's lavatory. For more than an hour they were psychoanalyzing their daughters—affectionately but with Dostoevskian thoroughness and indelicacy. On the same 6000-mile motor journey I listened to, or participated in, perhaps a hundred political arguments. None of them got very far, because after the first few sentences of challenge and counter-challenge, the antagonists invariably drifted into describing *why* they felt as they did about politics. They were more interested in explaining—and in hearing about—each other's mental processes than in winning battles.

In other sections of the country, if you ask what Jones is like, you are told, in the South, the kind of a family he belongs to, or in the East, that he is a Dartmouth graduate and vice-president of a woolen mill. That places him sufficiently in the local scale of values, and if you want to know more, you can cultivate Jones. But in the Middle West the first person you ask tells all. Jones, you are informed, was a pretty wild Deke

at the State University, but he's settled down since he lost money on that new flour mill process. He likes gin and bitters better than whisky, he does a little rounding occasionally because his wife is "kind of cold" to him, he gets on the stenographers' nerves by whistling at his work in the office, he was just a bit taken in by the New Deal at first, he'll talk your arm off, he gets bilious attacks in the hot weather, he's worth \$80,000, and he likes snake stories.

You meet Jones and go to a party at his house. The chief entertainment you find is persiflage between your fellow guests about their personal idiosyncrasies. The serious conversation is likely to consist largely of acute character analysis of intimate acquaintances, absent and present. Next day if a stranger in town asks you what Jones is like and you confine yourself to strictly impersonal details, something in the air warns you that your inquirer feels you are holding back on him. "Why they told me you were a pal of his," he may say with mild pathos. Intimate acquaintance in the Midlands carries with it not only the privilege of sizing up and exhaustively discussing one's boon companions, but a kind of moral and social obligation to communicate the results of one's observations to all presentable strangers on demand. This is another way of saying, perhaps, that Middle Westerners regard the differences between individuals as God's gift to human curiosity.

"Natural", at any rate, is the key word for describing the Middle-Western zest for these details. In all the cheerful and inexhaustible chatter about persons, there is a minimum of the scandal-mongering and back-biting tone, characteristic of Southern and New England villages where an interest in personalities is considered a form of pruriency, and its gratification a species of private lewdness. The Midland cult of personal curiosity is amazingly open and

aboveboard. Jones, after all, is as interested in explaining what he is like as he is in learning what the neighbors are like. He knows that Smith knows all about him — he told most of it himself — and will pass on his knowledge to casual strangers. Jones, on the other hand, will do as much for Smith when the chance comes; or, for that matter, as much for Jones if the stranger gives him a half-way polite opening.

For better or for worse, both Smith and Jones feel in the depths of their instincts that knowing all you can about the other fellow is a part of one's necessary equipment for living; that the sifting and comparing and philosophical utilization of such wisdom is the most normal and natural of human social pleasures. The same social instinct tells them that the man or woman who stands aloof from the give and take of this region-wide personal intelligence service must be neither quite human nor natural. He is high-hat, he is secretive, he is cold, or he must have something to hide.

Telling the world what they are like has been the dominant intellectual and social sport of the Midlanders almost since the first literate settler emerged on the sunset side of Cumberland Gap. There is more than coincidence in the fact that the doggerel couplet

Abraham Lincoln, his hand and pen,
He will be good but God knows when

is the earliest known Lincoln manuscript. Abe may have borrowed a rhyme that was going the rounds among the Gentryville schoolboys, but the Midwestern sub-god's first literary adventure was a bucolic attempt at self-portraiture. Whatever his private merits, Abe was not interested in the abstract virtues attributed to him by his legend. He wanted the Gentryville world to think of him personally and think of him as prankish.

The pioneer Midlanders, as a matter of fact, brought a feeling for the glamor of personality over the mountains with them in their baggage — and for the most understandable reasons. They were running away from the high price of farms in the coastal states, of course, as all economists will tell you. But they were also running away from their parts as stooges in a comedy of manners. In the 1780's and 1790's when the original settlement began, the political rights of average and sub-average Americans had just been established by successful revolution, but this had less than nothing to do with the recognition of the rank and file American's qualities as a person. In the whole record of the founding fathers, historical and apocryphal, there is scarcely a suggestion that any member of the Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton coterie ever encouraged, or permitted, a personal confidence from a social inferior. The reason was that the leaders of the successful revolution were eighteenth-century gentlemen. They belonged to a breed which felt that the dignity of their leadership and the security of society lay in rebuffing intimacies and familiarities between the classes, and in impressing "the rabble" — by which was meant the rank and file of tinkers, tanners, and dirt farmers of the new Republic — that what was expected of them was civil manners, not self-assertion.

In the first two decades after the Revolution, this freezing dignity of the founding fathers congealed, if that was possible, into an even greater rigidity. Nervous about their official eminence in the New Republic, jittery about the possible consequences of the democratic adventure they had let themselves in for, and badly upset by the French Revolution, they made it quite plain to their humbler fellow-citizens that they were to be ruled by a code of etiquette predicated upon General Washington's

complete indifference to humble fellow citizens as individuals.

The tinkers and tanners and dirt farmers, who had just won a Revolution in the name of Democracy, therefore moved westward with distinct feelings of frustration and annoyance, and with a hearty determination to break the rules of perfect social behavior, as "the wise, the rich, and the good" of the seaboard aristocracy had laid them down. They were off for the wilderness, and, next to picking themselves fat farms and founding new fortunes, the sweetest prospect about life in the wilds was the chance of escaping social inferiority and proving themselves interesting and important persons. The outlook was rendered even more charming when worthies like President Dwight of Yale and Congressman Josiah Quincy of Massachusetts began shrieking after the backs of the migrant adventurers that they were congenital loafers, tavern-brawlers, tax-dodgers, dead-beats, and jail birds — on the whole admirable material for forest gorillas. It would add to the long-deferred pleasures of individual self-assertion to show Connecticut high-brows and Massachusetts high-hats precisely where they got off.

But even if the pioneers had had no impulses toward exhibitionism, everything in the new situation favored it. The society they founded was so primitively democratic in its beginnings that not only did it lack codes of etiquette for suppressing a ramping individualism, but a settler's individuality was shortly discovered to be about the only social asset he had. Furthermore, there was world-wide curiosity about the settlers. From the Danube to Scandinavia, intellectuals wanted information hot from the wilds as to whether the new colonizers were reproducing the political processes of M. Rousseau's "noble savages", or the social felicities of M. de Chateaubriand's *Atala*.

From Maine to Savannah there was feverish interest in how morals were holding up in this painful separation from "the wise, the rich, and the good". Even President Dwight was sufficiently concerned to make an uncomfortable tour of western New York before penning his crabbed billingsgate.

Finally there was a rising tide of curiosity about mere persons quite unconnected with the rage for new Western primitives. The lowly and inconspicuous rustics who pushed through Cumberland Gap in the 1790's could hardly have known that in the same decade young Mr. Wordsworth was casting himself down on his couch and reporting the nuance effects of daffodil memories upon his inner life with a new kind of poetic virtuosity; or that a madcap child, now growing up on Sir Bysshe Shelley's estate in Sussex, would shortly identify individuality with the West Wind. Yet even the most illiterate of the pioneers marched with the Time Spirit rather than away from it. Instinctively they realized that an age which had cherished manners, orderly social subordinations, and philosophical abstractions as its supreme values was becoming outmoded; that the era now coming on would consider the personal differentiation between ordinary men supremely romantic. In short, the Midlanders found themselves in a world in which they could sell the story of what they were like on a bull market.

III

The first responses were definitely orgiastic. The Midlanders demonstrated that they were interesting and important persons by the eye-gouging exploits of the river-town ruffians, by composing the luridly personal pornographies of the Mike Fink saga, in their "half-horse and half-alligator" concepts of civic and private virtue, in the

offensive braggadocio of local militia generals and tobacco-drooling statesmen, reported after almost half a century of settlement in Mr. Dickens' *American Notes*. Their first literature burgeoned in chromo romances in which incredible nobleness foiled inconceivable villainies in pastoral Edens that could hardly have seemed plausible even to the land syndicates. Inevitably, too, the pioneers soon discovered, with howls of evangelical jubilation, that God was a connoisseur of personal relationships. "No familiarities" might be the rule of President Adams' drawing room, but in the Great Revival of 1800 the Midlanders celebrated their emotional intimacies with the Heavenly Father in a vast social orgasm of public hysteria. Being a backwoods cousin of young Mr. Shelley's *West Wind* was very exciting and led to no end of bad taste.

But orgiastic forms of exhibitionism began to lose caste with the second generation. By the 1830's, impeccably refined local poets and poetesses were carrying on the work begun in the Mike Fink epos, but the only theme which continued irresistibly to fascinate them was — what we are like. Half a century, for example, before James Whitcomb Riley dredged up the last resources of folk dialect and sentimentality to prove that the plain people were chock-full of piquant individuality, John Finley — a unique politician, since Richmond, Indiana, elected him the lone poetical mayor of American history — was indulging in whimsical rhymed portraits of the "young ones" in *The Hoosier's Nest*, and of

. . . . the honest son of toil
Who settles here to till the soil.
He is (and not the little great)
The bone and sinew of the State.
With six-horse team and one-horse cart
We hail them here from every part,
And some you'll see *sans* shoes or socks on,
With snake-pole and a yoke of oxen.

A decade or two later the regional gift for public bosom-baring was observable in new dovecotes. Of all the poetesses of the Suffering Female school of prosody, fashionable in the 'Forties and 'Fifties, none suffered with quite the same abandonment to confidential intimacy as the lady singers of the quinine and calomel-conscious Midlands. Miss Helen L. Bostwick, for instance, with *The Little Coffin* fairly entered the lists for the poignancy championship:

'Twas a tiny rosewood thing
Ebon-bound and glittering
That I loitering chanced to find
In the dust and scent and gloom
Of the undertaker's room —
Waiting empty — ah, for whom?

In a tone which he would possibly describe as "more lightsome", Mr. Eddie Guest — unquestionably the Midlands' supremely popular twentieth-century poet — fascinates his millions of readers with precisely the same exhibitionist facility. For more than a quarter of a century Mr. Guest has turned out his daily newspaper syndicate poem on all conceivable private moods, experiences, and memorabilia from how his aunts punished him for swear words to thoughts on the Baby Jesus in a Detroit automobile factory. If he has not yet written a jingle on "Why I Took Bicarbonate of Soda Wednesday after Luncheon" it is because the theme has not occurred to him, or Nature absorbs his acidosis. Mr. Guest would write it at the drop of a hat if it happened to him, and his public would receive it as further proof of the old Midland doctrine that all personal revelation ranks the same with the Muses.

But it is not necessary to pursue the record to exhaustion. When a Midlander sits down to compose a book, "what we are like" is the theme that occurs to him, and if he is consulting native authors, "what we are like" is the theme he prefers to read

about. This obsession with persons saturates Middle-Western literature in the same manner as it saturates Middle-Western life. Mr. Hamlin Garland, Mr. Booth Tarkington, Mr. Edgar Lee Masters, Mr. Sinclair Lewis, and the earlier William Dean Howells have been no less conscientiously — and joyously — concerned with telling the world the old, old regional story than Mr. Guest, or the makers of the Lincoln legend; or Smith, when you ask him the low-down on Jones.

IV

Now what has all this to do with politics? A good deal more, I suspect, than often meets the eye of certain political field marshals with vast reputations for strategy in the outlands. How one behaves during a campaign, the political arguments one gets into, the kind of vote one casts, are customary Midland ways of strutting before the world and showing off personality. Politics can be a means of dramatizing oneself no less than writing Guestian jingles or getting converted at Pentecostal revivals.

One can, for instance — or could until two or three years ago — pose as a fierce-eyed prophet of the true and the beautiful simply by stamping approval of the latest Anti-Saloon League orator and repeating his arguments in verbal brawls down at the drugstore. One can get standing as a superior humanitarian by preaching Townsendism from pinochle party to pinochle party, or simply by conveying implicitly that one will take on anybody any time on the proposition that Mr. Roosevelt has reformed big business. On the other hand, one can set up as a professional cynical philosopher merely by getting the reputation of greeting all references to social betterment through politics with the loudest ha-ha in the Elks club.

I have an elderly male relative, born during the Civil War in southern Indiana, who explains his lifelong Republicanism on the ground that he “just can’t get over the feeling that all Democrats are either Rebels or Copperheads”. To my personal knowledge his business affairs often as not have prospered under Democratic auspices and for the past forty years he has laughed each time he has said it. What he is doing is gathering in the mild personal *éclat* which almost any kind of Middle-Western social circle gladly extends to an amateur humorist with individuality enough to stick up for an old-fashioned whimsy. I doubt if my relative would vote to divest himself of the racy, old soil quality which he enjoys, if the Democrats brought ocean liners up the Wabash and subsidized his store.

The fact is that in any election contest with issues rising above the low emotional voltage of 1924, millions of Middle Westerners cast their votes in exactly the same spirit in which unofficially they have chosen Mr. Eddie Guest to be their regional laureate. They vote for the side which gives them the best chance to dramatize themselves as interesting persons. In 1916, to consider an instructive example, Mr. Wilson’s “he kept us out of war” plea gave them an opening to pose before the world as genial well-wishers of all mankind and the only Americans with a sound “to hell with Europe” attitude. Five months later the minor inconsistency that Mr. Wilson took us into the war caused no lapse in his popularity. In khaki the Middle West felt itself even more interesting than in speaking out against the East’s emotional involvements with the Entente. What really did blow Mr. Wilson out of the Midwestern waters four years later was his effort to install the “keep us out of war” idea as a permanent fixture of national policy through the League of Nations.

This, in effect, was telling the Middle West that a "to hell with Europe" attitude was unrefined and provincial, and that it would break the heart of the world if the Midland voters failed to follow the leader into a great adventure in tender-minded internationalism. The Midland voters conceivably might have dramatized themselves as tender-minded internationalists without supreme imaginative effort. What they could not do was to feel themselves interesting and important as persons while following a President who, according to their lights, was high-hatting them for one of their finest virtues—to wit, their indifference to international diplomacy. In result of Mr. Wilson's errors of psychological approach, 1920 turned out to be an almost record year for the Middle-Western voters to dramatize themselves as Bronx-cheering cynics in respect to noble aims in statesmanship. Although their votes were hardly needed, they buried Wilsonism under such landslides that even their fellow Midlander, James M. Cox of Dayton, has scarcely been recognizable in politics since.

Yet all the time, as it appeared to me while observing the campaign's phenomena journalistically, the Midlanders were feeling perfectly swell about it. The regional air was as electric with "he kept us out of war" wisecracks as it was with the currently modish Ford jokes. A lurid folklore of Mr. Wilson's alleged public and private crimes and vices—not to mention reprobation of his unimpeachable virtues—bloomed in the very kindergartens. Before dropping the hot potato of the foreign entanglement sentimentality, each Midland joker was making it plain how keenly he realized the humorous experience it had been to hold it, and before dropping the late chosen leader he was developing specifically and categorically all possible reasons for detesting him personally. Midland

politics, in other words, was in a state of acute normalcy. It was revolving, like Midland small talk and Midland literature, around each individual Midlander's egocentricity.

Now by my private calculating system, there are approximately 25,000,000 authentic Midlanders. The Kentuckians and Tennesseans, although their ancestors pioneered for the breed, have long been Confederates. The Oklahomans vote for gross stakes in oil, cows, and lynching bees rather than from the heart; both brands of Dakotans as well as most of the Minnesotans and La Follette parishioners vote their class rather than their self-consciousness. The psychological Midlands are thus a little narrower than the geographical description.

Among the 25,000,000 I question if any more political rhyme or reason will be invoked in the Great Decision of 1936 than was called forth by 1920's Solemn Referendum. Two sizeable elements of voters with the lifelong habit of voting their partisan inheritance will cancel each other off substantially, and so will a few groups who may be expressing their sentiments on acute economic grievances. Then the election will be decided—for New York and Texas as well as for Iowa—by the few million chronic waverers of the Midlands who, year in and year out with romantic self-consciousness, vote for the side that makes them feel best about themselves.

This year they may dramatize themselves as dashing innovators of new and lovelier economic systems; as shock-troops repulsing a big business counter-revolution; as soldiers in the natural warfare of plain men against Brain Trusters and city slickers; or as some vast and daring posse riding to death the soulless bureaucrats who fatten on honest men's relief bonanzas. Or dramatizations may be invented which no pol-

itician could conceivably dream of until they happen. In no case, however, is the validity of the issues or the strength of the campaign arguments likely to be of serious consequence in the region where the crucial political power balances quiver. If the Midlands are normal, the outcome will depend on which set of candidates and which party's propaganda incites the most Midlanders to believe that we are all pretty interesting and important people together.

After it is over, the probability is also that, having re-demonstrated their mastery of the Republic, the Midlanders will continue to let Big Business or the New Dealers, as the case may be, run it. After all, anyone can manage a government. But showing the world what Middle Westerners "are like" is what elections are really for. They can be almost as much fun, in fact, as telling the visitor from Pawtucket why Aunt Sally can't eat raw apples.



NOT FOR THE SICKLE

BY TED OLSON

TAKE the bitter kernel of your sorrow.
 Plow it under with the April furrow.
 Stitch the shroud above it with your harrow.

Weeds are quick to claim a field gone fallow.
 Let the burdock tousle knoll and hollow;
 Give the ditches back to thorn and willow.

Leave the land to autumn; let the sullen
 Rain dishevel it, the north wind's talon
 Strip the leaf, and sow the snow for pollen.

Let the crows convene, a grave and wintry
 Parliament, with one sardonic sentry.
 Let it be, to men, forgotten country;

Till some rabbit-hunting lad, or swimmer
 River-bound, and lost, recalls a rumor
 This was tillage, in an earlier summer;

And remarks, above the ruined furrow,
 One resplendent stalk, a wheaten arrow,
 Strange, and tall, and nothing like your sorrow.

GALSWORTHY

BY FORD MADDOX FORD

I MUST have asked myself a hundred times in my life: If there had been no Turgenev what would have become of Galsworthy? Or, though that is the way the question has always put itself to me, it might be truer to the thought I want to express to say: What would Galsworthy have become?

I might have asked the same question about Henry James, for the influence of Turgenev on James must have been enormous, but I did not know James before he had come across Turgenev, whereas I did know Galsworthy whilst he was still himself and still astonishingly young. And I remember distinctly the alarm that came over me when Galsworthy one morning mentioned Turgenev for the first time at breakfast. It was both the nature of the mention of the beautiful Russian genius and Galsworthy's emotion of the moment that alarmed me. I had known him for a long time as a charming man-about-town of a certain doggedness in political argument. Indeed, I don't know how long I hadn't known him; to find out exactly I should have to do more delving in thought into my own past than I care to do. But I knew that he was passing through a period of great emotional stress and as I had a great affection for him I was concerned to find him expressing more emotion over an anecdote than I had ever known him to show.

The anecdote was this: Turgenev had a peasant girl for mistress. One day he was

going to St. Petersburg and he asked the girl what he should bring her back from town. She begged him to bring her back some cakes of scented soap. He asked her why she wanted scented soap and she answered: "So that it may be proper for you to kiss my hand as you do those of the great ladies, your friends."

I never liked the anecdote much, myself. But Galsworthy, telling it in the sunlit breakfast room of my cottage at Winchelsea, found it so touching that he appeared to be illuminated, and really had tears in his eyes. I daresay the reflection of the sunlight from the tablecloth may have had something to do with the effect of illumination, but it comes back to me as if, still, I saw him in a sort of aura that emanated from his features. And from that day he was never quite the same. . . . The morning is also made memorable for me by the ghost of the odor of a very strong embrocation that hung about us both. He was, at the moment, suffering from severe sciatica and I had spent the last half-hour of the night before and the first half-hour of that morning in rubbing him in his bed with that fluid which consisted of turpentine, mustard, and white of egg. And suddenly I had of him a conception of a sort of frailty, as if he needed protection from the hard truths of the world. It was a conception that remained to me till the very end . . . till the last time but one when I came upon him accidentally watching one of his own plays in New York,

all alone and, seemingly, very perturbed. I don't know by what.

The disease from which he suffered was pity . . . or not so much pity as an insupportable anger at the sufferings of the weak or the impoverished in a harsh world. It was as if some portion of his mind had been flayed and bled at every touch. It entered into his spirit at about the date of which I am speaking and remained with him all his life. And, for me at least, it robbed his later work of interest, since the novelist must be pitiless at least when he is at work.

And it filled me with disappointment. I think I must have been the first person really to take Galsworthy seriously as a writer. For most other people who knew him then — except of course for the lady who subsequently became Mrs. Galsworthy — he was still an amiable, rather purposeless man-about-town, with a liking for racing, with some skill with the shotgun, a proper connoisseurship in cricket. But I had already recognized in him a certain queerness, a certain pixy-like perversity . . . and a certain, slight, authentic gift. So that I had expected him, if he persevered, to provide for us another kind, sunnier, of Trollope, and I very much did not want him to become over-serious or emotional.

And suddenly there was Turgenev — the most dangerous of all writers for his disciples — Turgenev and emotionalism appearing in the mentality of that sunny being with the touch of genius. . . .

I am always being hammered by my associates for saying that Galsworthy had a touch of genius as a novelist. And indeed I was hammered by Galsworthy himself for telling him that that was what he had. He was himself obstinately of the opinion that if ever a writer was constructed it was he. And in the process of getting himself

made he submitted to an incredible amount of buffetings by advisers. It used to seem almost a miracle that he could find his way about his own works whilst he was writing them, so frequently was he counseled by one person and another to change all the salient passages of his books. Certainly the Galsworthy who emerged from all that was someone immensely changed, hardened, and, except for his plays in which his native gift was more allowed to have its way, he was dulled. . . . To that I shall return. Let me for the moment try to finish getting in my original Galsworthy.

During the earlier years of our acquaintance I had gathered the impression from Conrad, who knew him as a pleasant idler long before I did, that his rather slight figure and blond head contained a frame and a brain of iron. Conrad, with characteristic generosity when speaking of a dear friend, used to declare that Galsworthy held the mile record at Oxford. At times it would even be the world record. But it was certainly the Oxford one. And, on my first meeting with him — though not my first sight for I had seen him at a club — he had elected, rather than to ride in my dog-cart, to trot beside me the two miles from Sandling Junction to the Pent. He said he needed exercise, but as the road was uphill it had seemed a stiffish way to take it. So I had accepted Conrad's account of his friend's exploits without demur and, as it wasn't the kind of thing that Englishmen would talk about, there was in my mind no question of his being a mile record-holder at the time I rubbed him in Winchelsea.

Actually he had rather distinguished himself at Harrow at cricket and on the cinder track. If I had known that, I should have considered his first literary efforts more seriously. Because for a man to go through the terrific grind of preparing him-

self when comparatively mature for the effort of taking a mile record would be the worst training imaginable for a literary life, whereas for an adolescent to distinguish himself at Harrow would merely mean that he was a stocky fellow.

These slight shades of English ruling-class life at that date are difficult to convey, but they are worth dwelling upon. To excel in those days in anything — even in private — was regarded as extremely dangerous. To excel to the point of anything like publicity would be to write yourself down a bounder and if you incurred the slightest suspicion of that it was all over with you. It was nice to have a Blue — for cricket or rowing. It would even help you at the bar afterwards if you wanted to be a practicing barrister . . . But then in the boat there were eight of you and on the cricket team eleven, so you did not stand out. And I am certain that, just as my friend Marwood, who was one of the finest mathematicians of his day — just as he purposely made a mistake in his final examination at Cambridge so as to be second and not Senior Wrangler — so Galsworthy, if there had been any danger of making a record at Oxford, would have stumbled before reaching the tape.

Later, indeed, I happened to ask him some question about running — it was at the time of the first Olympic Games in Athens — and said innocently:

“You hold the mile record at Oxford, don’t you?”

He really jumped a couple feet away from me — we were walking in the Park — and exclaimed:

“Good gracious, no! Oh goodness gracious, no! I did a little running at Harrow. But at Oxford I never did anything but loaf about the High. . . .” As a matter of fact, he declared, the very little running he had done at the school on the hill had

injured his heart so he could not have done anything in that line at Oxford. And, as a matter of fact, too, he had, he said, not done anything in any line at all. He had just scrambled through his examination for the bar. That was all.

And he had duly eaten his dinners at the Middle Temple and, like every other gentleman’s son of those days, had been called to the bar. That is to say that if one was at all “born”, one had till about then gone either to the bar or into the Army, or if one were born and a very younger son one went into the Church. But at the time Galsworthy was called to the bar, the Army was already showing signs of becoming a rather serious affair, and with the fall in the value of agricultural tythes, the Church had become a not very lucrative profession. So he had donned wig and gown for a ceremonial attendance on the Courts, as being the proper thing for a gentleman’s son who had no ambitions and intended to loaf through life. He had, I understood, appeared once or twice in cases, representing, as a junior counsel, the important firm of which his father was the chief partner, and, during the voyage on the *Torrens*, of which ship Conrad was the chief mate, he had rather desultorily studied naval law.

And there he was, an athlete with a mildly damaged heart, a barrister with no desire for briefs, the perfect man-about-town . . . and for me a very incomprehensible figure. Conrad said that he was as hard as iron under a soft exterior and tenacious as a bulldog in spite of a carefully feigned pococurantism. On and off I saw a good deal of him, but his talk was mostly of the Eton and Harrow cricket match, the sires and dams of race horses, very desultorily of tariff reform, the woes of Ireland, the behavior of the Boers. Occasionally he would talk a little about some

concert or other, his sister, Mrs. Reynolds, being melomane, and occasionally he would talk about pictures, his sister, Mrs. Sauter, being married to an artist. When it was a question of books, I did the talking and he would listen with an interest that I took to be merely polite.

We both at that time inhabited an august, sedate hilltop in the royal borough of Kensington called Campden Hill, he on the one side and I on the other of a concreted open-space given up to tennis courts — it was really the cover of a waterworks reservoir. And on days when I was not expecting Conrad, who was in lodgings not far off, I would breakfast with Jack in his sunlit, converted stable.

At any rate that is how it comes back to me — the doors and windows always open, the sunlight streaming in on the hissing silver teakettle, the bubbling silver entrée dishes, the red tiles of the floor, the bright rugs, the bright screens. And we would talk until it was time for me to go back along the waterworks wall and take up the interminable job of writing in my dining-room patchwork passages into *Romance*, with Conrad writing *Nostromo* up in my study. And Galsworthy would be going to ride in the Park. . . .

And then, suddenly, it all went . . . Pop! As if someone had cut the key string of a net and it all unraveled and disappeared — those tranquillities.

II

It began with that Turgenev anecdote. I had been right to be alarmed. I had by then known for some time that Galsworthy occasionally wrote a short story, rather desultorily as young ladies paint landscapes in water-colors. Then one day with a rather ironic, dubious expression, Conrad told me that "poor Jack" wanted me to read some

of his stuff . . . and I rather liked some of it. Even at that he seemed too shy to talk about his writing, so I had made a few remarks as to *progression d'effet*, the *mot juste*, and the like. And I had imagined that he had dropped his writing. But immediately after the Turgenev anecdote I opened inadvertently a letter addressed to him in care of myself. It was the morning after he had gone back to Town. Then I knew immediately after the reading of merely three amazing words and the signature that poor Jack had his troubles of the heart.

It gives the measure of the passion that I have for not knowing anything about the private lives of my friends — particularly if they are writers — that, as I have somewhere related, I should have gone to extremes of trouble over the forwarding of that letter. I desperately did not want Galsworthy to know that I knew. It seemed to me that that must inevitably take the bloom off the pleasure that I had in our gentle and unexciting conversations. I knew then at once that the emotion he had shown over the Turgenev anecdote was a sign that he was suffering a great deal over his hidden affair of the heart. I knew from the signature that it was one that could not run smoothly. If he had been an ordinary layman I should have stuck the letter up, inscribed it "Opened by mistake", and forwarded it to its owner. But Galsworthy was by now more than an ordinary stockbroker or politician. He had come alive. And I took a great deal of trouble to get that letter to him without any indications of its having been opened.¹

¹I told this story of the letter recently, as a case of conscience, in one of my books, suppressing of course Galsworthy's name. Now, however, that his official biographer has told the whole story of the fortunate love affair of the author of *The Man of Property*, there seems to be no reason for further concealment.

Galsworthy gave no signs of thinking that the letter had been tampered with and for a little time it looked as if everything was as it always had been. We breakfasted and talked about the weather and the crops; we went together to concerts that his sister, Mrs. Reynolds, was organizing; we discussed the alterations that his sister, Mrs. Sauter, suggested in the story he was writing . . . which was, I think, then the *Villa Ruben*, a book for which I had and still have a great affection. Then gradually the change came.

He began to talk of Turgenev as the emancipator of the serfs in Russia; about the reform of the poor laws; about the reform of the incidence of the income tax on the poorer classes. And above all, of course, about the reform of the marriage laws, and perhaps still more about the re-estimation of marriage as an institution. He uttered one day the sentiment that where there is no love, there is no duty.

Then one evening he knocked on my door in a really pitiable state of distress. I was giving a rather large dinner, one of the motives of which was to introduce Galsworthy himself to the more formidable critics and men of letters of the London day. His book was then near publication and Conrad and I had conspired to do that amount of log-rolling. And suddenly there was Galsworthy at seven-thirty saying that he could not come to that dinner. He said that if I knew what was happening I should not want him to come to dinner; that all my guests would think the same. Mysterious things were happening to him; he would probably never again be invited to dinner by any one. I should know all about it tomorrow; then I should see how right he was.

It was no use saying that if he had been hammered on the stock exchange or neglected to pay his racing debts it would

make no difference to my desire to have him at that dinner. He said: No, no! It would be unthinkable. It would be an offense to myself such as he would never pardon if it had been offered to him. . . . It was the first time I had come up against his immense, his formidable, obstinacy.

He wrote to me next day to say that he had that afternoon been served with papers as corespondent in a divorce case. Of course my guests would have hated meeting him! And he wanted to know if it would make any difference in our friendship.

Times of course have changed, but I think that even then the ordinary man would have taken the matter less tragically. Galsworthy, however, insisted on considering that his social career and more particularly that of his future wife was at an end, and that for the rest of their lives they would be cut off at least from the public society of decent people. He was, of course, quite wrong. Even at that date London society took the view that, for a decent man and woman, passing through the divorce courts was a sufficient ordeal to atone for most irregularities. Once they were through, they had taken their punishment and decent society does not approve of two punishments being exacted for one misdemeanor. . . . But at the time it was no good putting that view to Galsworthy. He was in many ways singularly old-fashioned and strait-laced.

But more than anything he was sensitive to the sorrow of other people. He was that even before he had thus got, as it were, religion, and the long excruciation of waiting years for the opportunity of happiness had made him sensitive beyond belief. The anticipation of possible future grief for his wife rendered him at the time almost out of his normal mind and the emotion was rendered all the stronger by the

thought of the suffering that for years before that she had had to endure . . . with, as it were, Soames Forsyte. I really thought that, at about the time when he had just received those divorce papers, he might have gone mad. . . . And that note of agonized suffering at the thought of oppression or cruelty became at once the main note of his character and of his public activities. It led him, in his novels, into exaggerations or slight strainings of the humanitarian note which distinguished every page of his writings of that date and, as we shall see, it influenced the very framework of his novels themselves. And his very exaggerations tended to negate the truths of the morals that he meant to enforce.

So you had the once famous controversy of the rabbit. . . . At the end of the description of a battue in *The Country House*, having rendered, with all the spirit of Tolstoi after his conversion, the massacre of game that had taken place, in order to get the full drama out of the stupidity and cruelty that obviously distinguish those barbaric slaughters of harmless beings, he found it desirable to emphasize the note and to describe how "one poor little rabbit" crept out into the open to die. Now, two pages of the description of the slaughter of deer in the *St. Julien L'Hospitalier* of Flaubert, utterly dispassionate and without comment as they are, might well suffice to put you off the shooting of all game whatever . . . certainly off the massacre of driven game. But wounded rabbits do not ever die in the open . . . of choice. Even domestic animals, if you let them alone while they are dying, will creep under a bush if a bush is to be found . . . or else under a low piece of furniture. . . . And we ourselves seldom like to die under the sky, preferring to turn our faces to some wall.

So someone noted this exaggeration of poor Jack's. And controversy broke out, in the sporting journals, in men's clubs, in bar parlors, in country houses. The more scientific readers of the journals wrote to say that, wherever rabbits die, they never die in their burrows. Their companions would force them out to die where they could. Hardened rabbit-hunters for the pot, warren-breeders, gamekeepers, wrote or declared in inn-corners that that was all nonsense. Again and again when digging out rabbits they had found dead ones among the living. The scientists declared that this only occurred when the dying rabbit was too large and heavy to be forced out of his lair. The living rabbits would then, in order to avoid living with the putrefying body, have to abandon that home and dig a new one. . . . But one and all declared that Galsworthy did not know what he was talking about. So the book lost a good deal of influence with its readers. It would be unfair to say that it had been written with the sole object of stopping the practice of shooting driven game. But that had been one of its purposes. And he gave the upholders of game-preserving and intensive shooting the chance to say that damaging thing.

For Galsworthy knew perfectly well what he was talking about. But his Tolstoian reaction against his former life had made him forget what, in his subconsciousness, he must have known to be the truth. At any rate, before his regeneration, he had spent nearly all his autumns shooting driven grouse, pheasants, and partridges. Many of his earlier letters contain expressions of exhilaration at the thought that the game season was opening again. But his revulsion from the life of the man-about-town was at that date very thorough and the emotion of shuddering at every one of his former habits penetrated to

every fiber of his being. He was determined, if he could, to bring about a change of heart in human society.

III

There was at this time raging in literary and artistic society in London much such a clash of views as lately distinguished New York. Reformers of all types declared that no work of art could be real art if it were not also a work of propaganda for the Left. And nearly all serious English novelists were finally driven to take that view. The novel became a vehicle for every kind of "ism"; a small but noisy minority backed Imperialism and bank-holiday patriotism, but the serious novel as a whole interested itself almost solely in sociological questions.

As against that a still smaller but sufficiently formidable band of foreign writers had at the time settled mostly in the South of England. The most important of them were Conrad, a Pole; James, Crane, and Hudson, all Americans and the body of writers for the once immensely famous *Yellow Book*. That organ had been founded by Henry Harland, the author of *The Cardinal's Snuffbox*, an American who had come to London by way of Paris, and its supporters were all either foreigners or had had foreign, mostly Parisian, trainings. It was the day when England, and America too, rustled all over its literary quarters with the names of Flaubert, Maupassant, and, above all, Turgenev. That camp proclaimed that a work of art must be a passionless rendering of life as it appears to the artist. It must be colored by no exaggerations, whether they tended to exalt either the Right or Left in politics. The public function of the work of art in short was, after it had given pleasure, to present such an epitome of life that

the reader could get from it sufficient knowledge to let him decide from it how to model both his private and his public lives. Thus Flaubert wrote that if France had read his *Education Sentimentale*, she would have been spared the disasters of the Franco-Prussian War. He meant, not that France would have learned from him how to choose a better rifle than the *chasse-pot*, but that if France had learned from that book how to question her accepted ideas she would have had a set of citizens capable of studying public questions with realism. Then she could have taken precautions against the Prussians. . . . The business, then, of the artist was to study the works of his predecessors . . . the works that had given pleasure. In that way he would learn how to give pleasure in his turn. And, rendering the life of his day as he saw it and without preconceptions, his world would at least be enlightened as to the conditions in which it lived. It might even, then, improve itself.

Those at any rate were the two schools of opposed literary thought that divided the world when Galsworthy came on the artistic scene. In addition, as I have already adumbrated, the Conrad-James-Crane school, to which I belonged, believed that you could learn nothing technically from Turgenev. There are, that is to say, certain writers — Shakespeare is among them — who have not really "methods" . . . who write, as it were, solely from their temperaments. Such writers are exceedingly dangerous to the learner. He can learn nothing technically from them and he is extremely likely to fall into an imitation of their mannerisms and into trying to assume their temperaments. Galsworthy says in a letter that Mr. Marrot prints²

² *Life and Letters of John Galsworthy*, by H. V. Marrot. The author kindly lent me advance sheets of the work when I had reached this stage of this article.

that he did not consider himself a born writer, but one who had made himself with the labors of the eleven years that preceded the writing of his *Man of Property*. At that I have already hinted. He said it again and again at many different stages of his life. He repeated it even in the draft of the speech in thanks for the receipt of the Nobel Prize, which death prevented his delivering. And if he said it at that moment of his apotheosis he must have believed it to be true. It was not true, of course.

It might have been true to say that he was not a born novelist and, from my particular angle, it might be true to say that he never was a novelist at all. But writing is not all novel-writing and there were departments of the art of projecting things on paper in which he really excelled and was conscious that he excelled. It is true that a writer must be born a writer. But it is true, too, that a born writer can be made over . . . to his detriment; and I do not think that any real writer can have ever been so made over as the unfortunate young Galsworthy. I must have written him reams and reams of letters about his early work. Mr. Marrot prints one that takes up some four whole small-print pages of his book. And sometimes Galsworthy took my advice and sometimes he stood out against it with the grim obstinacy that was his chief characteristic. For myself I should have found such a letter intolerable if it had been addressed to me, but Galsworthy was always ready for more . . . and ready for more from almost anybody who would address advice to him. His chief advisers in those early days were Conrad, Mr. Edward Garnett, who was adviser to Fisher Unwin, the publisher; and his sisters, Mrs. Sauter and Mrs. Reynolds . . . and the lady who was to become Mrs. Galsworthy, and myself.

And I think I can say that it was the last mentioned two who had the earliest and most complete belief that he had genius.

I do not believe that any of the others, at any rate at that time, had at all that feeling. The sisters had towards him a nervous maternal attitude such as was natural in sisters with a brother who wanted to do anything as wayward as "write". For, if he would be merely normal, he would be assured of a perfectly comfortable position as a man-about-town and a member of the best clubs. Conrad never really liked Galsworthy's writing. He had for him, I should say, a real personal affection and appeared radiantly pleased when Jack came to visit him. But, I suppose just because of that personal affection, he was not ready to accord to that pleasant boy any share of talent. It did not seem that anyone so pleasant could have the sort of grim persistence that Conrad considered to be indispensable for a writer. He wrote him of course letters full of an appreciation of his work that he expressed in terms of superlatives. But at the same time in private he always spoke of "poor Jack" with sighs; and as Mr. Marrot brings out, he wrote to his own private correspondents letters expressing no sort of opinion at all of Galsworthy's gifts. As against that he gave himself a very great deal of trouble to place Galsworthy's work.

And later, when Jack was beginning to succeed, his indignation at the younger man's dogged humanitarianism went beyond bounds. He used to say that, as a writer, Galsworthy took a sadic pleasure in rendering the cruelties that the world inflicted on the weak and the unfortunate . . . and that he would be upset if those wrongs were righted because then he would have so much the less to write about. That of course was not true.

But as I have said, Galsworthy had about him a pixy-like quality that rendered him very difficult to understand. I don't mean to say that I understood him altogether. There were about him too many irreconcilabilities; there was the impressive surface softness and a subcutaneous quality, as if of corundum. His benevolences were unparalleled; no man can ever have given a greater share of his income or a greater proportion of his time and worried thought to the unfortunate of every type. This appears sufficiently in Mr. Marrot's book, but if Mr. Marrot had a great deal exaggerated that note he would still have been well within the bounds of the truth. I know this because of the constant stream of miserable people which came almost straight from Galsworthy's doorstep in Addison Road to the offices of the *English Review*. Nearly all of them Galsworthy would have already relieved. Or rather he would have relieved all of them. But occasionally he would telephone to me to say that if So and So should come to me he did not consider him to be a proper person to receive relief from the fund that at that time I administered for the help of literary men in distress. . . . And it is to be remembered that the cases that I knew of were merely those of writers . . . there must have been more than as many more again who were laymen that he helped. Mr. Marrot says that Galsworthy lived on half his income, devoting the rest of it to public charities or causes; but more than half the sum that he set aside for his own use must in addition have gone to private cases. For those private charities were to him his life.

I think that, even more than his writing or his public honors, they were his life. . . . But suddenly there would come out an incomprehensible touch of hardness, as if some unfortunate had incurred his dis-

pleasure, or as if some public cause had all of a sudden appeared to have undesirable aspects. These things would be irreconcilable. He would at one time declare that the very fact that a man was no good was the reason that he should be helped, untiringly. Because it is poor, weak things that must be helped. Men with backbone can always in the end help themselves. And then, suddenly, of the most dreadful case of totally undeserved misfortune that I have ever come across he said, shutting his jaw tight, that the fellow was no good and had better not be helped any more . . . and that after he had been helping the man for a long time.

Of course it is given to no man to be consistent. But in Galsworthy it was something more than inconsistency: it was two distinct psychologies working side by side in the same being. That was why I have said that he seemed to be like a pixy . . . as if he were one of those good, serene, and beautiful immortals that had not human souls and yet occupied themselves with human affairs.

It was something of that quality that I felt myself to discern in his earliest work. Conrad, in writing compliments to Galsworthy, said about one of his stories that enthusiastic as he was, my admiration was much the greater. And my emotion was much more of a keen delight in a natural phenomenon — as if a new bird had suddenly sung — than of pleasure in a technical, literary achievement. It was the pixy-like quality of his temperament that had called it forth. It was a quality that I hadn't found anywhere else in the world . . . and that I do not think you will still find anywhere else.

And that, in the end, is the justification of the artist in words — that he should be and express something that has never yet been, or been expressed. To me it became

apparent gradually that Galsworthy was probably never meant to be a novelist. Or it would be more just to say that thoughts of the world of injustice pressed too strongly on him to let him continue to be a novelist. That was why, at Winchelsea, I was alarmed at his rendering of the Turgenyev anecdote. . . . I can assure you that I felt a genuine pleasure and impatience at the thought of coming across a person with the aspects for me of an authentic genius . . . and if I perceived a threat to the prospect of the fruits of that genius growing eventually ripe beneath the sun, I was proportionately dismayed. And I thought I perceived that threat. I foresaw for a moment his preoccupation with the unhappinesses of lovers and the helpless poor . . . and that preoccupation leading him to become not a dispassionate artist but an impassioned, an aching, reformer.

IV

The premonition was too true. *Villa Rubein* was a novel of a sunlit quality. But its successor, *The Island Pharisees*, was already a satire, and *The Man of Property*, which came next, was an attempt to cast discredit on the marriage laws of the day. And after that, in his novels, he was the reformer almost to the end.

And unfortunately his temporal success as novelist obscured his much greater artistic achievement with the drama. His novels suffered from his dogged determination to find ironic antitheses. His one "effect" as a novelist was to present a group of conventionally virtuous, kindly people sitting about and saying the nicest things about all sorts of persons. . . . A divorced woman is thrown over their garden hedge and breaks her collar bone, and all the kindly people run away and do not

so much as offer her a cup of tea. And that goes on forever, the situation being always forced to bring in that or some similar effect. Mr. Marrot quotes a really amazing correspondence between Mr. Garnett and Galsworthy about the end of *The Man of Property*. It raged for months. Galsworthy was determined that his Bosinney — who was the last person in the world to do it — should commit suicide in order, really, to prove that the propertied middle classes were very cruel people . . . with of course the aim of shaming those classes into becoming really kinder. Mr. Garnett, all reformer as he too was, is shocked at the idea that Bosinney — who was the last person in the world to commit suicide — should be forced to take his own life so as to show the effects of the cruelty of the middle classes. What Bosinney would have done — and what the situation demands — would have been to run away with Irene and live in inconspicuous bliss in Capri ever after. But no, says Galsworthy, that would not prove that the middle classes are always cruel and victorious over the unfortunate. . . . And the argument seems to go on forever, each party maintaining exactly the same ground. In the end poor Bosinney has to be run over by a bus, the reader being left uncertain whether it is the result of an accident or a suicide . . . and there seeming to be no moral lesson at all.

But the same dogged determination to present antitheses which produced an effect of monotony in the later novels was exactly suited to the theater, where effects are of necessity more fugitive and need to be harsher — more cruel. And the keen pleasure that the mind feels at appreciating how, unerringly, Galsworthy picks up every crumb of interest and squeezes the last drop of drama out of a situation . . . that pleasure is the greatest humanity can

get from a work of art. It is the greatest because pleasures, shared as they are in the playhouse, are contagious and can be unbounded. And it is one of the most legitimate of man's pleasures.

When you came away from the first performance of *The Silver Box* you knew that something new had come into the world . . . a new temperament, a new point of view, a new and extraordinarily dramatic technique. And the conviction was strengthened by each new play. For myself I preferred *Joy* to all the others because it was more a matter of discussion than of situations, and because it had some of the lightness that had distinguished the *Villa Ruben* of our youths. But the characteristic of building up antitheses which, monotonous as it becomes in the novel, is always legitimate and exciting in the swifter moving play, that characteristic distinguished as much his handling of situation as of staged controversy. And finally that conviction came to be shared by the large, unthinking public, the plays began to run for periods of years in both London and New York, and Galsworthy moved from triumph to deserved triumph. No other modern dramatist had anything approaching Galsworthy's loftiness of mind, his compassion, his poetry, his occasional sunlight or the instinctive knowledge of what you can do on the stage. And by himself he lifted the modern stage to a plane to which until his time it had seemed impossible that it could attain.

And so he made towards supreme honors a tranquil course that suggested that of a white-sailed ship progressing inevitably across a halcyon sea. You would have said that he had every blessing that kings and peoples and Providence had to bestow. Having refused a knighthood he was awarded the highest honor that

the King had at his disposal—that of the Order of Merit. He presided in Paris at the dinner of the international P.E.N. Club, which is the highest honor that the members of his craft could find for him; and, in the end, the Nobel Prize Committee honored itself by selecting him for one of its laureates. It seemed, all this, appropriate and inevitable, for, in honoring him, the world honored one of its noblest philanthropists.

The last time I saw him was in Paris when he gave his presidential address to his beloved P.E.N. And singularly, as he emerged above the shadow of all those hard French writers, there re-emerged at any rate for me the sense of his frailty . . . of his being something that must be shielded from the harder earnestnesses of the world. I don't know that he was conscious on that last public triumph of the really bad nature of the hard men who surrounded him. The world had moved onward since the days when he had read Maupassant and Turgenev for what he could learn of them. Both those writers were what he called dissolvents and the Paris *littérateurs* now wanted above all constructive writing and would have agreed with him if he had said—as he did in one of the last letters that he wrote—that Tolstoi was a greater writer than Turgenev.

But he said nothing of the sort. He seemed to float, above all those potential assassins, like a white swan above a gloomy mere, radiating bright sunlight . . . and with his gentle, modest French words he made statements that ran hissing all through Paris as if he had drawn a whip across all those listening faces.

For the French writer of today, Maupassant is the Nihilist Enemy—an enemy almost as hated as the late M. Anatole France.

And Turgenev is an alien ugly duckling who once disgusted the paving stones of Paris with his alien footsteps. Nothing indeed so infuriates the French of today as to say that Turgenev was really a French writer. . . . And there, enthroned and smiling, poor Galsworthy told that audience that shivered like tigers in a circus cage that, if he had trained himself to have any art, and if that training had landed him where he was, that art had been that of French writers.

A sort of buzzing of pleasurable anticipation went all round that ferocious assembly. The author of *Fort Comme La Paix* looked at the author of *Nuits Ensoleillées* and thought: "Aha, my friend, this is going to be a bitter moment for you. When I consider the *dédicace* of the ignoble volume that this barbarian chieftain presented yesterday to me . . . when I consider the fulsome, but nevertheless deserved, praise that he wrote on that fly-leaf, I don't have to doubt whom he is going to claim as his Master. . . ." And the author of *Nuits Ensoleillées* looked back at the author of the other classic and thought exactly the same thing—with the necessary change in the identity of the author. And every French author present looked at every other French author and thought thoughts similar. And when the applause subsided poor Jack went on:

Yes, he repeated, all the art he had had he had had of the French. If he stood where he was, if he was honored as he was, it was because all his life long he had studied the works, he had been guided by the examples of . . . Guy de Maupassant and of him who though a foreigner by birth was yet more French in heart than any Frenchman,—Ivan Turgenev!

I have never seen an audience so confounded. If an invisible force had snatched large, juicy joints of meat from the very jaws of a hundred Bengal tigers the effect would have been the same. They simply could not believe their ears. . . . As for me, I was so overwhelmed with confusion that I ran out of that place and plunged, my cheeks still crimson, into the salon of the author of *Vasco*, who was preparing to give a tea-party at the end of the Île St. Louis. And the news had got there before me. It was in the salon of every author of the Île, of the Rue Guynemer, of the Rues Madame, Jacob, Tombe Issoire, and Notre-Dame des Champs, before the triumphant Galsworthy had finished his next sentence. . . . For that was the real triumph of his radiant personality, that not one of the fierce beasts quivering under his lash so much as raised a protest. No other man in the world could have brought that off!



AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

FOND hope expressed by the San Francisco *News Letter and Wasp*:

The opposition to Mr. Roosevelt will gain little with a cartoon campaign. . . . Artists of good taste may refuse to draw cartoons of him. They may realize that he is too big a man to caricature. Cartoonists have been known to refuse.

THE Staff Denouncer of the same celebrated Coast publication cuts loose at loose females:

Why otherwise delicate appealing females insist upon lacquering their fingernails to disgusting hues of red is not in my school of thought. Crimson coated nails conjure, in my mind, a woman's blood-spattered hand emerging from a gory corpse.

THE New Literary Criticism, as reported by the Reynal and Hitchcock book-news department:

When Louise Todd reviewed *Marching! Marching!*, Clara Weatherwax's proletarian prize novel, in the current issue of the *Western Worker*, she was writing from experience when she said: "It's United States. It's today, here, now! It's us." For Miss Todd is prisoner No. 58,298 in Tehachapi prison, California, where she is serving a sentence on a technicality which arose in connection with a campaign last year which put the Communist Party on the ballot in California.

ADVANTAGES enjoyed by the faithful, as vouched for by the editor of *Mind Magazine*:

I have been asked to amplify my statements regarding the Healing Temple and the connection of the Masters with it. It is in this temple that the Masters congre-

gate from time to time for meditation and to give instruction. It was on our pilgrimage there that we had the experience of watching twelve and later fifty-two of the party walk calmly and conveniently across the surface of a stream two thousand feet wide, running full bank with a strong current. The remainder of the party spent four days detouring to the nearest bridge and joining those who had crossed on the water in a few minutes.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE American Soviet gets itself written up at the expense of the federal Treasury, according to the *New York Journal*:

At a cost of \$1,500,000, or 50 cents a word, relief workers of the WPA are preparing a new guide book of America. In charge of the 4,600 WPA writers whipping the volume into shape is none other than Mrs. Katherine Kellock, whose husband, Harold, is the press agent for M. Troyanovsky, Soviet Russia's Ambassador to the United States.

INDIANA

ANOTHER hellish capitalist plot is discovered, this time in the Middle West, by the well-fed young men of the wealthy *New Republic*:

Purdue University recently inquired into the employment status of its women graduates. . . . The average annual salaries of the graduates of the classes from 1928 to 1934, inclusive, were found to range from \$800 for the class of 1933 to \$1,280 for the class of 1930. . . . While, of course, there is a bright side to this—the earnings might be lower—the publication of these figures looks suspiciously like part of the propaganda movement to discourage college attendance.

CHEERFUL though portentous thought, as recorded in the Anderson *Herald*:

"How You Will Look Fifty Years From Now" will be the theme of Rev. O. E. Line's sermon at the Line Gospel Tabernacle next Sunday night at 7:30 p. m. Rev. Line has arranged with Ralph Berryman, funeral director, to have a coffin brought into the tabernacle in the manner practiced at a funeral.

The Line gospel tabernacle quartet will offer some appropriate musical numbers, and Rev. Line will preach along the thought that those present will be gone from this life by that time. The coffin has been trimmed so that each person passing by will see his or her reflection and get the correct idea of how they will look under these conditions.

KANSAS

DIFFICULT, perhaps impossible task set for the people's representatives by the forward-looking Wyandotte *Echo*:

STOP! LOOK! AND LISTEN!

Editor's Note: It is now settled beyond question that from now onward until there is a change in our constitution, Congress will have to do things on its own hook. That means that Congressmen will have to develop the virtue of THINKING.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

AMERICAN efficiency hustles to the aid of the housewife, according to the United Press:

Milady may now have egg yolks to match her breakfast gown. Experts attending the convention of New Hampshire poultry growers say they can provide blue yolked eggs for the woman who eats her morning meal in blue dimity. Other colors specified are green and brown.

NEW YORK

OBITUARY of a communist, as indignantly reported by the virtuous *Daily Worker*:

Waldimir Isaacs (Charles Bronson), of Canandaigua, N. Y., has been expelled

from the Communist Party as a traitor to the working class, a rotten self-seeker, who openly campaigned for the Republican Party in the 1935 elections.

He came out with statements in the local press of Canandaigua, as well as with leaflets calling upon the workers to vote the "entire Republican ticket to express your desire for efficiency, economy and sanity in government". He lauded the local Republican administration for saving \$6,500,000 from relief funds and county credit. . . .

Workers and farmers everywhere, and all working class organizations should beware of this traitor and scoundrel.

THE *Internationale* brought up-to-date by the same distinguished publication:

Oh, the workers began to frown,
As the wages went down and down—
Wo- ho- ho- ho- ho- ho-
So we struck right there!

Then the bosses began to frown,
As the pickets went roun' and roun'—
Wo- ho- ho- ho- ho- ho-
Boy, what a scare!

And when the scabs came roun'
The committee threw them down
The stairs, below, below,
Wo- dileco- ho-
Y'oughta see them bounce!

Oh, the bosses had to come roun',
As the Union smashed 'em down—
Wo- ho- ho- ho- ho- ho-
And we won our strike!

MIKE GOLD, formerly Staff Epigrammist of the same journal, rares back and gets off a real lollipaloosa:

Marxism makes for subtlety, variety, controversy, experiment, not for regimentation.

THE happy messiahs of communism, in their luxurious *New Republic* offices, look on the sunny side of things while reviewing *The Red Network*, a rogue's gallery of practicing American radicals of the New Era:

A good many years from now, say in 2036, the ancestor-seekers of that time will probably be just as anxious to discover the names of their forebears in "The Red Network" as would be our living admirers of dead revolutionaries to find the names of their great-great-great-grandparents on the passage-sheet of the "Mayflower." Mrs. Dilling has produced, by accident, something of a blue book of the newer aristocracy.

THE penetrating mind of George Soule, one of the same journal's highest-paid idealists, takes a nasty crack at capitalism:

The Pennsylvania Railroad belongs to a lot of stock and bondholders; the Moscow subway belongs to everyone in the nation.

HORRIBLE results of birth control as envisaged by a thoroughly alarmed editorial writer in the *Catholic News*:

A falling off in the number of babies means not alone a decline in the consumption of milk, but a decreasing demand for many necessities associated with childhood. . . . There is bound to be a progressive decline in the need for all kinds of American products, as well as housing, and as a result our manufacturers will be deprived of a market for their goods. This will mean national bankruptcy—and to the birth controllers must go the ignominy of having destroyed a great nation.

SAD news for boy and girl Comrades, as reported in the columns of the *New Pioneer*, a magazine for circulation in radical nurseries:

By the way things are going, it looks as though nobody ever reads the *New Pioneer* at all. I don't believe this is true, but it is the only reason I can think of that will explain the slow progress of the Drive for \$3000. What is the trouble with all you slow ones, especially you, Buffalo, Minnesota, Omaha, Seattle, Denver, Texas, St. Louis, Florida, who haven't sent in a cent! Don't you like the *New Pioneer*? Don't you care whether it comes out or not? If none of you are going to do anything for the magazine, it is in grave danger of not coming out.

A READER of the *Sun* writes in with a pithy summation of the Power of the Ballot:

Criticisms of Governor Lehman's revenue estimates are irrelevant because he will be reelected next November long before anybody can tell whether his figures are right or wrong.

A NEW Literary Movement gets under way with the following announcement:

THE CESSPOOL
2709 Webb avenue,
New York City

A new little magazine is in the planning. But when we say that the *Cesspool* will be different, we really mean it. The basic aim of the journal will be to serve as a dumping ground for the literary garbage of American youth. In short, we are offering the pages of our little magazine to the young people of America who are as yet unpublished and unsung. We hope that the *Cesspool* will become truly representative of the talents of the growing generation. If our magazine should prove successful it will indicate that American youth has durability; if it fail, it will mean that our future masters are today stagnant, fit for nothing more than a cesspool.

PROLETARIAN Literature rises to extraordinary heights in the serial now enthraling the readers of the *Modern Monthly*:

WELCOME LAMB!
by Dorothy Dayton

The story thus far:

Professor Eisenstadt, the world's greatest scientist, through some formula known only to himself, received a message from Ammerran, a planet in the Milky Way, announcing the impending visit of one who signed himself JESUS. The announcement gave the nation's business leaders an attack of the jitters, and after an unsuccessful attempt to have the visit postponed, they arose to the occasion and gave the visitor, who arrived as scheduled in a bright cloud, the usual New York welcome. Although skeptical of his identity, they honored him with a banquet at the

Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and speakers told him of the progress made on this planet since Zero A.D. The press, not wishing to do anything that might destroy business confidence or retard the recovery movement, announced simply that the visitor was a king from Ammerran. It is not generally known that Ammerran is an underwater planet inhabited by mer-people. The visitor, a quiet modest fellow who immediately adopted the dress and manners of the planet, ventured into Union Square, saw that matters were not exactly as had been represented by the nation's leaders, and performed his first miracle—a multiplication of sable coats in the loaf and fish tradition. He was severely reprimanded by the General, on behalf of the NRA, who particularly cautioned him against food miracles, explaining that in America scarcity paves the path to riches.

OHIO

THE thing gets to be a habit, after a while. From the Warren *Tribune Chronicle*:

Harry C—— is held today on a paternity charge. Officials said the charge was filed by a young woman who once before filed a similar charge against C—— in connection with a previous birth.

WYOMING

A CHEF solves several century-old secrets, and presents the good news to the waiting world via an advertisement in the *Cody Enterprise*:

ANNOUNCEMENT

Whenever you get tired of your daily food we have something new—Sukiyaki.

The most favored dish among high social circles at Tokio, New York, and Washington. Pleasing to the palate, easy to digest.

My Sukiyaki is cooked very carefully without destroying Vitamines "B" and "C" by high heat and specially designed to contain more Vitamine "E" than any other food in the world; therefore I do not suggest it for young, unmarried people.

This new food will increase your physi-

cal strength, prevent internal sickness, and increase your vitality and mental powers.

Also—Vigor Chicken Soup—25c. Especially designed for married people and elderly folks, to give them increased physical power. It has the highest Vitamine "E" content the same as my special Sukiyaki.

Come in and try these newly designed foods—you will like them.

IN OTHER NEW UTOPIAS

ENGLAND

EFFICIENT method for reviving British prizefighters, often called Swooning Swans, as noted by the *News-Chronicle*:

After Police-constable W. Hughes was knocked out in the first round of his fight with Constable T. J. Carlisle in the last bout at the inter-police boxing tournament in Belfast last night, the band struck up the National Anthem. Seconds had failed to revive him, but when Hughes heard the anthem he sprang to his feet and stood to attention groggily until it was finished.

INDIA

SERIOUS setback to *belles lettres*, as noted by the Associated Press:

Mahatma Gandhi, who has been ill recently in Bombay, was asked by a news agency correspondent for comment on Rudyard Kipling's death, but unfortunately he was unable to make any because he had just had two more teeth removed.

RUSSIA

LATEST word on the New Theology from the model land of the Brain Trusters, according to the United Press:

Speaking last night at the tenth anniversary meeting of the Society of Militant Atheists, Nina Kemneva, a pretty blonde girl of 22, holder of the woman's delayed-jump parachute record, assured the meeting that she had searched vainly for God in the air.

"I have flown high and jumped many times in parachutes," she said. "I saw no God and no angels."

CURLY COMMITS MURDER

A Story

BY MAURICE SAMUEL

WHEN I first met Curly, about six years ago, he was thirty-five and looked twenty-four. He was blond and slim and quiet. College and athletics were written on his face, and there was about him a disarming ingenuousness, an unpretentiousness and good nature which made him extremely attractive. His speech was modest and diffident; his manners, especially in the presence of women, were winningly correct; the total impression was that of a decent, wholesome, and healthy young American, neither intellectual nor stupid, neither highly emotional nor yet depressingly stolid, but tolerant, intelligent, kindly, unaffected, and reliable. Yet a congenital vagueness, an intrinsic nebulousity, haunted his acts and words and thoughts. There was, about every structure of fact with which Curly was connected, an endless alternation of seeming honesty and seeming duplicity.

It took me almost three years to get a working formula for his case, and I came across the key to it accidentally. I always liked to hear Curly allude to his "kid sister". There was something refreshing in his affectionate and hesitant pronunciation of the words. He might be saying that he had been at her house the evening before; or that they had gone to the theater together; or that she had expressed an opinion worth repeating; and always she emerged in his talk as someone indescribably charming. She was so clever, he said,

a Phi Beta Kappa, in fact, and yet such a good, straight kid, too. She was so free from malice, from petty envies and ambitions. She had been so gentle with her mother. All these qualities Curly implied whenever he said, "My kid sister." One felt rather than saw a slight blush coming into his face when he pronounced the words. There was something irresistibly collegiate about him then; a touch of pride, protectiveness, and humility. If it was slightly amusing, the amusement was not derogatory or ribald; it was rather pathetic and wistful, reminiscent of childhood ideals and of far-off, out-moded chivalries.

Yet when I finally met Curly's sister, Elaine, I was staggered not so much by the fact that she was an extremely commonplace person (I was not prepared for such a let-down, but I said to myself that a brother's affection is not the best medium through which to get a reliable estimate of a person), but by the fact that she was then thirty-six years old, one year younger than Curly. However indefinite my other preconceptions were, I could have sworn that she was at least fifteen years his junior. Of course he had never said anything about her age. Only the intonation in his voice, his whole manner, his diffident fatherliness, or at least big-brotherliness, had indicated, with the most rigorous precision, a very young person: a sister who had at one time admired his fabulous

manhood while she sat on his knee, who had waited for him to come back from college so that he could take her to the circus. Still, here she was, a rather plain, hefty, and phlegmatic person of practically the same age as Curly. I suppose that when one is nineteen one may properly allude to a sister who is a year younger as "the kid sister". But somewhere in the middle twenties this form of allusion becomes, I insist, a little misleading. And in the thirties it is definitely ridiculous. . . . Then and there it occurred to me that Curly's was a case of arrested development.

As I got to know Curly better, I discovered that he was a wonderful boon companion. He knew it, and was very proud of it. He held his liquor "like a prince" (one of the highest verbal awards Curly ever bestowed), and if he had fits of moroseness he kept them to himself. He seldom spoke badly of anyone, but he would often be heard to say of a man, "He's a decent sort. Damn decent." By this he meant, I think, that the man was open-handed, simple, manly, ready to help a stranger in distress, courteous to inferiors, a friend to the death, and unafraid of a fight; in brief, he was "white". I learned, however, that Curly himself had no "friends to the death". He knew, or seemed to know, an incredible number of persons, many of them of importance. His quiet way of saying "Why, yes, I know him" left the degree of intimacy in doubt. But he was always ready to use his acquaintanceships to procure favors for others. He was always getting jobs for people. I would hear of cases from him, casually and absent-mindedly, or from others whom he had told about them. Only now it occurs to me that I never met one of the persons who "got a job" through Curly. I only knew that he had sent an applicant for work to a judge, or police inspector, or department-

store manager, or newspaper editor, and that the applicant got the job. It was rather impressive; and it was credible at first because Curly was so likable that it seemed natural for people to be doing him favors.

But whether or not he had ever got a job for someone, Curly was always chock-full of information concerning any number of enterprises, realized or in projection: a new theater that was being built, a newspaper about to be launched, a prize-fight that was being promoted, a merger of movie firms that was being negotiated. I cannot tell how accurate his information was, but there was a great deal of it. He talked with the easy, unboastful self-assurance of an inside man, a friend of the principals, giving financial details, the history of personal rivalries, the real purpose behind public statements, the plan behind the plan; and since he had nothing to gain from his talk it never occurred to anyone to contradict him. His conversation was therefore as interesting as the material of a good Broadway columnist. And, after all, what did it matter, from the objective point of view, whether the information was accurate or not? Truth, in this sort of gossip, is not more illuminating or instructive than fiction.

But from the point of view of Curly's character it did matter, of course, whether the information was accurate or not, and whether he had taken any pains to find out. And one was always tempted to ask, "If he knows all these people and is on the inside with them, why doesn't he do something about it for himself? Why is he merely a hanger-on, or observer? Why doesn't he turn his ground-floor information to account?" Curly himself, so questioned, would have smiled boyishly: he wasn't the kind of man to exploit his friends. Also he would suggest, remotely,

romantically: "Others he saved, himself he could not save." Personally I would not challenge Curly's dubious intimacy with the important on these grounds. I am quite certain he was familiar with many prominent and semi-prominent personalities. But his influence with them was, I think, illusory. It existed, or seemed to exist, only as long as he did not try to make use of it. There are many persons who seem to be able to do you a good turn by putting in a word for you with the right people; they do not do it—not because they are unwilling, but because they maintain their apparent status by never trying to exploit it. Their status is not substantial. It is honorary. It carries no perquisites. It is a carnival uniform.

If Curly had no "friends to the death" (he never used this melodramatic phrase; but it represents what he had in mind when he spoke of friendship) it was because *au fond* he could not be taken seriously by men. Nor did he want to be, in all probability. Friendship is a practical and rational matter, as well as an emotional one; it calls for reliability, common-sense, punctuality, and stability. It is a serious enterprise. I cannot see that Curly was fit for genuine friendship. He was, however, quite successful with women.

This last statement, too, needs modification and expansion. The women he hung around with (the phrase is vulgar, but it is accurate enough) were almost invariably provincials—girls who had come to New York from Baltimore, Kansas City, New Orleans, St. Louis, in order to meet "interesting people", such as they could not find at home. (Why these girls, of a universal type, should think they are entitled to meet Interesting People has always been beyond me.) They were nice enough, in their way. They were young; they wanted culture—though they had

none of the preliminary equipment for the acquisition of culture (to wit, a cultured soul); they were good natured; and they were dull. They liked Curly because he was at once young and not young; because he seemed to combine the artlessness and uncynical kindness of the college boy with the *savoir-faire*, or at least the connections, of the man of the world; and because he seemed also to be the key to the metropolis, or the transition into its interior—an interior which, by the way, does not exist. Curly was always promising to introduce them to artists, writers, musicians, actors. Now and again two or three such girls would club together to arrange a party, and Curly would actually appear with someone whose name had been in the papers. He even introduced me to several of the girls. And I found out later that he always played me up to them in the most outrageous fashion, not out of admiration for me, but to make me important in their eyes and himself correspondingly interesting.

Since there are always tens of thousands of such girls in New York, Curly had a large field for his operations. And he was always up to the neck in intrigues. I discovered, finally, that he borrowed money from these girls, not systematically but with a haphazard frequency which avoided the stigma of systematic graft but retained all its advantages. I must say that he never borrowed from me, nor even tried to. He needed me, as he needed quite a number of others, for a different purpose. We were part of his stock-in-trade, the few writers, or singers, or artists to whom he could introduce his girl-friends. He had, besides, another use for us, which I shall mention a little further on.

The foregoing may sound harsh; and perhaps it may have a certain subtle inaccuracy in it, for I must repeat that in

the sum everybody found Curly such a likable fellow. He radiated and inspired kindness; he seemed to represent decent, common-place ideals in a world of frantic selfishness and ambitiousness; he made one feel that there was a grain of good in the human race. And perhaps there are certain human beings whose function it is not to produce anything, and not to make a living, and not to justify themselves by deeds, but simply to be supported or helped along because they are pleasant, harmless, restful personalities. This theory I might have been prepared to accept for Curly if it had not been for the murder—I can think of it as nothing less—of Louis Jadwin.

II

It does not matter on what grounds Curly told Jadwin he could get him a job. It is my judgment that Curly had no right at all to say to that wretched and harassed man, "Colson and Bernie will give you a job on my say-so." Or even, "I believe I can help you get a job with Colson and Bernie." In fact, he had no right to say anything. And if he believed, in any fashion, that he could help Jadwin get a job with Colson and Bernie, he had no right to that belief either.

What, then, made Curly act as he did and—assuming he believed himself—believe what he did? My answer is: the pressure of the moment; the irresistible temptation—which refused to consider consequences—to pose as an unexpected savior, a providential apparition. Such a degree of irresponsibility may seem incredible; yet it is not altogether uncommon. It is present in the normal person when he is drunk, and it takes the same form in him then as it did in Curly when he was sober. The intensity of the present

pleasure blurs the perception of the future. It may even be heightened by the threat of possible disaster or regret. I think it was in Curly's case, and this is what made him such a wonderful boon companion. I have seen him come into the possession of fifteen or twenty dollars which he needed badly for rent, and spend the amount in two or three hours in a speak-easy. He was at his happiest then. He would stand at the bar offering drinks all round—and not drinking much himself—simply because the release, the brief imitation of a man to whom a ten-dollar bill was small change, flooded him to the exclusion of every rational consideration. It overrode the instinct of self-preservation. Nothing existed in the past or future, nothing existed in the whole world, but this tumultuous and laughing moment. It was, instead of a rut of kindness, a spending rut, a rut of conviviality and carelessness, a feeling of "Good old Curly" and "This is the life."

What would happen afterwards I could only guess, for Curly kept his troubles to himself as far as I was concerned. And here I may mention the second use to which Curly put me and a few others. We were, in a manner, his references. We were the ones he did not disappoint or play tricks on, if he could possibly help it. Apart from us, the few, his audiences had to change frequently, for the irresponsible man can behave irresponsibly only once or twice in the same milieu. Those of us who have a limited milieu and want to keep it, realize this and behave more or less responsibly. Curly's huge acquaintanceship was the result of his constant change of friends. A man he had fooled once or twice with regard to a job or a loan could not be fooled a third time. Women would, perhaps, be more patient. Or perhaps they would lend him money with the feeling

that as between the sexes a loan of money has in it faint implications of a gift. I did not know, until the incident with Louis Jadwin, what Curly was like, or what his line of behavior was while sliding away from a responsibility. I have an idea now, of course. I suppose that Curly had quite often done with others the kind of thing he did with Jadwin. These men persisted for a longer or shorter time, according to their obstinacy or gullibility, in pursuing the phantom of Curly's promise, and then gave it up. But Jadwin's case was quite extraordinary.

He turned up one morning at my apartment, bringing with him a letter of introduction from a common friend of ours in Chicago. The letter told me that Jadwin was a pianist and composer of distinction but not of fame, and that he had not earned a dollar in the year or so he had been in New York. My friend had be-thought himself of me only within the last few days: anything I could do for Jadwin, any job I could get for him, etc. I cursed my friend silently, for he must have known that the only thing I could do for Jadwin was—send him to someone as helpless as myself. If, instead, my friend had asked me to give Jadwin a few dollars, I should have been pleased and relieved.

But Jadwin, though he looked as if five dollars would mean a great deal to him, also made the impression of a man to whom a stranger could not offer money. He was haggard; his clothes were threadbare; his manner was desperate. But he spoke quietly: he did not boast about his accomplishments; he made no attempt to play the starving genius. He said: "If you can get me any kind of job. I don't care what it is. It needn't be in my line—though I'm ready to give piano lessons for fifty cents and carfare, or play in a restau-

rant for ten dollars a week and meals. Any kind of job: errand boy or dishwasher. I don't care."

I judged him at first to be thirty-five, but he must have been younger. But even when a young and presumably unmarried person speaks to me quietly, urgently, sensibly, as Jadwin did, telling me that he is down and out and must have a job, and I can do nothing, I have two impulses: one is to run away, the other is to fly into a rage. I told Jadwin, simply, that my friend had had no business to send him to me. I knew few people; I knew none who had jobs to give. I could not help him. If, by one chance in a thousand—

Jadwin was listening in a stupor when Curly called from downstairs. He was coming up with a book which he had borrowed and I had asked him to bring back that morning. I was grateful for the breathing spell. I introduced the two men. I could not help even at that moment thinking what a charming thing it was to see Curly making a man's acquaintance. He said "Glad to know you" so genuinely, he brought to bear on the encounter so much good-will, that the man whose hand he was shaking could have sworn that someone had been saying nice things about him to Curly. Yet Curly showed a certain diffidence, too; he conveyed a sense of the privilege which he knew was being bestowed upon him. He even betrayed a slight embarrassment. I remembered a saying of Nietzsche's: "Do you want to flatter a man? Be embarrassed in his presence." But of course Curly did not act on formula.

I saw Jadwin's face light up.

"Am I intruding?" asked Curly.

"No," I said. I explained the situation tactfully. Jadwin was seated again. His eyes were fixed on Curly, and I caught him following my words with his lips. When

I was finished he repeated, like an incantation: "Any kind of job; errand boy or dishwasher. I don't care."

Curly nodded, looking neither at myself nor at Jadwin. Then he said, quite irrelevantly, "Can I use your phone?"

He dialed a number and waited. No reply. Curly replaced the mouthpiece. "Do you happen to have heard of Lakin, of Colson and Bernie?" he asked, turning to Jadwin.

"No."

"He's the real owner of the firm. Colson and Bernie are only employees, but he uses their names because they've made so many song hits. Lakin doesn't go down to the office much, and I wouldn't call him there anyway. Now I happen to know that Colson and Bernie need a couple of men in the editorial department. It's no use your going to see Colson or Bernie—"

"I know it," said Jadwin, bitterly.

"They've always got a long list of their own friends. But this is special. You go and see Lakin at his home. At five o'clock. He's always in then. I'll give you a note, and I'll call him again, before you get there. He'll do that for me."

He sat down and wrote a short letter. Jadwin looked at him open-mouthed, and when the letter was ready shook Curly's hand, babbling, "It's wonderful of you to take the trouble. Honest, it is, it's—"

The faint, fine blush with which I was familiar came over Curly's face. "Why, it's no trouble at all, Mr. Jadwin. It's just an accident. It's just one of those things—"

"I hope he hasn't got his men yet," Jadwin said, feverishly.

Curly shook his head. "No. He hasn't. He's only just begun to think about it. You'll find this all right."

An immense relief had come, via Jadwin's change of feeling, into the apartment. I was as grateful as Jadwin. I no longer

felt like crawling under a couch and apologizing because I too was not penniless and starving. I could have embraced Curly, not only for what he had done, but for the fine, gentle, hesitant, and yet matter-of-fact way he had done it.

III

Both men left soon after, Jadwin looking as if he had won a reprieve from the electric chair, Curly rather uncomfortably, as if he hated it to be known that he had done a good deed. I worked cheerfully the rest of the morning, lunched contentedly, and spent the afternoon at the Library. That evening I dined with friends, played bridge, drank a little, won six dollars, and came home at midnight.

I found five telephone messages at the desk downstairs, strung out evenly between five-thirty and eleven-thirty. Through the variations introduced in the spelling by the colored boys who alternated at the switchboard in the evening I recognized the constant—Jadwin. I thought, at first, that he had called me for a little money, now that he was assured of a job. By all means. He should have my winnings and a little more.

At midnight he reached me.

"This is Louis Jadwin speaking," he intoned. I didn't like that voice.

"Yes, Mr. Jadwin."

"That address. Mr. Lakin doesn't live there any more. He moved away a few weeks ago. Do you know his new address?"

"No. Did you ask at Colson and Bernie?"

"I did. They hadn't it. Or they wouldn't give it to me. They said I could address a note for him in care of them. I neglected to take your friend's address, too. Can you give me that? I'm terribly sorry to bother you—"

I could see him, quailing and desperate, at the other end. Already he had spent twenty-five cents, calling me.

"I haven't got Curly's address," I said. "But I'll get it first thing in the morning. Is there any place I can reach you?"

"I haven't got a phone."

He that hath not, from him shall be taken away. I could not even save nickels for him.

"If you're in town tomorrow morning," I said, "go to the office of Maurice Gunther." I gave him the address. "Any time after ten."

In the morning I phoned Gunther's office—Maurice was a mutual friend of Curly's and mine—and from his secretary, Miss Stowe, ascertained that she knew Curly's address. I wrote it down for myself and told her to give it to Jadwin when he came in. At eleven o'clock Jadwin called me. He had obtained the address and telephone number from Miss Stowe, he said. He had called Curly. Curly was not home. He had called Curly three times. Now he was turning to me again.

"Are you speaking from Gunther's office?" I asked.

"No. I didn't like to use the phone there. I'm calling from the outside."

Those nickels made me sweat.

"It's no use your calling Curly," I said. "He's probably out for the day. But he may call me. If he does, I'll leave Mr. Lakin's address at Gunther's office. If you're passing that way in the afternoon, drop in and get it. Otherwise give me your address. I'll write you as soon as I have the information."

I jotted down his address. I stayed in that day for lunch, my work unfinished. Jadwin hung over me. I called Curly, leaving a message that he was to phone me as soon as he came in or got in touch with his hotel. At two o'clock he called.

By this time my nerves were on edge, and Curly's jaunty, "Say, I got a message to call you," did nothing to soothe me. I said angrily: "You gave that poor devil, Jadwin, Lakin's old address. He's been haunting me all day for the new one."

"Good God!" Curly answered. "That's right. Mind you, I knew he'd moved, too. I'll find out the new address from Colson or Bernie and I'll call you back in ten minutes."

I, in turn, called Gunther's office. Jadwin happened to be in. "Tell him to wait there a few minutes," I said to Miss Stowe. "I'll let him have Mr. Lakin's address."

The minutes passed—fifteen, thirty, forty-five—no call from Curly. I rang up Miss Stowe again and told her not to let Jadwin go. Another fifteen minutes, another half hour—not a word from Curly. Blast the idiot, I thought, blast him for his unpunctuality. I called the office once more, and told Jadwin to go home. I couldn't bear the thought of him sitting there. I said I would mail him the address, special delivery.

Late in the evening Curly reached me. I had stayed in especially for him, and I was raging. But he headed me off with a highly indignant narrative.

"Can you beat it?" he said. "They wouldn't give me Lakin's address. Neither Colson nor Bernie. They're crazy. I know they've got it. I was going to their office to have it out with them, but I couldn't get there in time. Do you know where I've been—"

"I don't care where you've been," I almost shouted. "You might at least have called me to report. That poor idiot's been hanging around—"

Curly was abjectly apologetic. "I know it's terrible," he said. "I've been doing nothing all day but trying to get Lakin's address. Now I *know* where to get it. At

the Ganymede Club. He might be there himself, and then I can tell him about Jadwin."

"All right," I said. "I'll stay in."

Curly did not call me that night. In the morning the deadly voice of Jadwin inquired over the telephone whether I knew anything more. I gripped the instrument. "No," I said, very quietly. "But the moment I know I'll wire you."

In the afternoon, a call from Curly. He had the address! What a time he'd had getting it, too! Mr. Lakin was not at the Ganymede. Mr. Lakin was somewhere or other on account of a proposition which — Mr. Lakin had changed his habits — Mr. Lakin this — Mr. Lakin that — it was all very plausible.

"Give me the address," I said.

A few moments later I wired it, from my room, to Jadwin. Well — that was that.

But that was not that. The next morning Jadwin again. There was no variation in his voice. I would have thanked him for a little display of temper. I would have been grateful for the privilege of putting up with it, just to show how conscious I was of guilt. No — he complained in that sick, maddening monotone of hopelessness that Lakin had left for Florida the night before. It occurred to me that this man Jadwin was not quite normal. Why should he waste a nickel to let me know that Lakin had left for Florida? A man in normal condition would have cursed me and Curly for arousing his hopes in vain, and let it go at that. But perhaps Jadwin was by now completely incapable of facing an utterly prospectless future; he dared not give up Lakin and Curly, even though commonsense told him it was a hopeless combination. Or, rather, he dared not believe what commonsense might have told him. And then again perhaps he thought that by confronting me with the disastrous

consequences of Curly's carelessness, he might make me feel responsible for it, and obligated to some sort of restitution. That was, in fact, the effect he produced.

"Did you tell Curly?" I asked.

"No, I couldn't reach him."

What was there for me to do? I apologized at length, and promised Jadwin that I would make a special effort to find something for him. I would write him. I would wire him. I would not forget him.

He faded off the telephone, leaving me in a perspiration. Missed Lakin by a night! Wouldn't that break any man's heart? And then — I remembered that Curly had promised to speak with Lakin that very first day, before Jadwin got there at five o'clock. Obviously Curly had made no real attempt, or he would by then have found out, or been reminded, that Lakin had moved. Pretty cheap, I thought.

I did not call Curly again. I judged it to be useless, and I did not want to see him. Then, three days later, I met him in a restaurant in the West Forties — jaunty and good-humored as ever.

"That's a fine mess you made of getting Jadwin a job," I said to him.

He stared at me. "What do you mean? Didn't that guy get the job?"

It was my turn to be taken aback. Had there been subsequent developments, unknown to me?

"He called me three days ago," I said, "and told me he found Lakin's new home all right, but Lakin had just left for Florida."

Curly sat down with a look of irrepressible disgust. "That fellow should be taken out and shot," he groaned. "It'll be cheaper. He wasn't meant to find a job."

I was going to answer hotly, but held myself in.

"Lakin isn't in Florida," said Curly. "I saw him in town last night."

"Did you speak with him?" I asked.

"No. He was with a crowd of people, and we just said hello to each other. I was certain by that time that Jadwin had the job."

I wanted to turn my back on Curly and leave him there. I wish now I had done just that; I wish it with all my heart. Instead, however, I succumbed to his manner and let myself think (against my instincts, against my reasoned judgment, against my sanity even) that perhaps there *had* been a string of wretched coincidences. If only there was the faintest hope of doing something for Jadwin, of *forcing* Curly to attend to this business seriously. . . .

I asked: "But why should they tell Jadwin at the house that Lakin was in Florida? What's the sense of that? Do you think Lakin came back last night?"

Curly concentrated, like a schoolboy given a detective problem. His face cleared. "I bet you I know what happened!" he exclaimed. "You see, Harry Lakin is staying with his brother George now. Every year about this time George goes down to Florida. See what happened? Jadwin didn't ask for Harry Lakin. He just asked for *Mr.* Lakin. Now you know, the maid must call George Lakin *Mr.* Lakin, and Harry Lakin *Mr.* Harry. I bet you fifty dollars to a peanut that's what happened."

"Curly," I said, mournfully, "do you think Jadwin can still get that job with Colson and Bernie?"

He answered, with complete spontaneity: "I'm sure he can. They're opening a new department in a few weeks. I *know* they haven't got the staff together yet. Only where is that fellow Jadwin?"

"I have his address," I said. "Will you phone Lakin this afternoon or this evening, so that Jadwin can see him in the morning?"

"Certainly. You can count on that."

He said it with a simplicity which would have made it impossible for an outsider to guess that the case was now stale and old, that the favor had been dragged out until the sweetness of it had gone. Curly seemed to feel nothing of that. I did not know what to do. I know now that I should have trailed Curly, I should have stood by him all afternoon, until he reached Lakin. I should have listened in on the conversation. I thought of it even then, but it would have sounded mad to suggest it.

IV

I wired Louis Jadwin that afternoon that Harry Lakin was in town, that he would be at home to receive Jadwin some time in the near future, that he was to hold himself in readiness for a second wire. I thought: this is the final test. I'll forget what's happened till now. If only Lakin receives Jadwin: even if there's no job: just the interview.

That evening, by merest chance, I ran across Curly again. Yes, he had spoken with Lakin. Lakin was ready to receive Jadwin next morning, at any time up till eleven, at home. I sent off the second wire to Jadwin.

And Jadwin did see Lakin the next morning. For, at half-past ten, he was on the telephone, giving me an account of the interview. Mr. Harry Lakin was dreadfully sorry, but he had sold out his interest in Colson and Bernie several weeks ago. His successor was the well-known musical publisher, Mr. Alexander Gitlin. Jadwin pleaded with Mr. Lakin to give him a letter to Mr. Gitlin. Mr. Lakin refused, though not categorically. He said that Curly knew Mr. Gitlin quite well, and could give Jadwin a letter direct. Then he added that he would be glad to use his own

influence, too, if he could have a talk with Curly first. But in person. As soon as he had seen Curly—

I said to Jadwin. "Did Lakin tell you that Curly had phoned him yesterday about you?"

"He didn't mention it, and I didn't ask. I just presented the letter."

My heart sank, and anger crept up my throat. I was quite certain by now that there was no prospect, none whatsoever, of getting Jadwin a job with Colson and Bernie. Curly did know Lakin, obviously. But he was evading him. It was doubtful whether he had telephoned Lakin. He had sent Jadwin up on the off-chance of finding Lakin in. Curly had probably borrowed money from Lakin. Why else should Lakin want to see him? The disheartening muddle and my rage made me speechless. Then I made up my mind to be cruel with Jadwin.

"I must say it sounds bad," I said. "They've probably got the vacancies filled by now. We'll have to think of something else."

"No, the vacancies are still there," he said, in a voice which came as near eagerness as his condition would let him. "I know it." He had heard from other sources that Colson and Bernie were reorganizing; they were opening a classical department; they were taking on several editors.

I began to feel the desperation of a trapped animal. The fantastically involved coils of a specific Curly case were tightening around me and strangling me. There *were* vacancies, then, at Colson and Bernie! There *had* been some truth in what Curly had been saying! For a moment I saw everything in a blur. I came to, and asked myself: How can I tell Jadwin what kind of person Curly is? How can I warn him against certain madness if he pursues a prospect in which Curly is the key? He'll

think I'm insane, or that I'm trying to shake him.

There was one way out: to get hold of Curly *physically*, to hold him, to make him go with Jadwin to Lakin or Gitlin, whatever the outcome might be. Then, one way or another, Jadwin would see for himself.

"Of course you've called Curly to tell him this?" I said.

"I can't reach him," he said, with a sick man's voice. "I hate to trouble you like this, but if you knew what that job, just that kind of job, too, means to me—"

"All right," I said, curtly. "We'll see this through." A spasm of fury shot through me. I'd be damned if I'd let Curly wriggle his way out. There was going to be a showdown if it cost me a week's work. "Mr. Jadwin," I said, "please come to my hotel tomorrow, will you? I'll get those letters for you. I'll have Curly see Lakin. Don't worry."

My voice and my manner must have put heart into him, for they put heart into me. After all, I thought, there is a limit to evasiveness. I would pit against Curly's slipperiness a persistence which would mean definitely one of two things—exposure, or delivery of the goods.

In the morning Jadwin came, and I observed in him a disquieting change of bearing. He had apparently concentrated the remainder of his vital hope on Curly and the job with Colson and Bernie. He was like a man who has been told by a doctor that one medicine, and one medicine only, can save his life, and that one man, and one man only, can procure the medicine for him. Unable to think of dying, the man must perforce believe that the medicine will be forthcoming. Jadwin was under the impression that we *had* to get the job for him. He was even quieter than before; but it is an error to assume that the exertion of will-power is accom-

panied by noise and gestures. On the contrary; the more assured the will, the less it needs the propaganda of pose. And now, trapped between Jadwin and Curly, I told Jadwin—probably aping his calmness a little—that he was to stay in my apartment while I found Curly. *He was not to stir out.* He was to have meals sent up to him—I would arrange for that. As soon as I found Curly I would come and fetch him—Jadwin—and the three of us would not part company until we had had—and not merely arranged—the interview with Lakin or Gitlin. My grimness probably confirmed Jadwin in his delusion, but by this time I was hardly thinking of him. I was in a state of fury resembling a case of manic-depressive insanity.

V

I cannot remember the course of the day. I must have been at Curly's hotel three or four times, since I do remember (one remembers the feel of an emotion more obstinately than a mere incident) that I no longer trusted the switchboard-operator. I called up the "kid sister" a few times. I was in and out of a number of speak-easies and restaurants which Curly frequented. I hunted him with obsessional persistence. And, if I remember rightly, I did find traces of him. He had been seen in the company of others, the night before. I judged that he had not gone home. He had spent the night at a downtown hotel. That was all, until the early afternoon. Meanwhile I telephoned regularly to Jadwin and to Gunther's office: to Jadwin in order to make sure that he hadn't left: to Gunther's office because I had left word there, with Miss Stowe, to invite Curly up on "an urgent matter of business" if he should phone. Miss Stowe returned a steady negative to my inquiries. Jadwin

answered in a crescendo of excitement and hope. I kept putting him off with various excuses.

Then, by an astounding coincidence, I found Curly or, rather, I spoke with him. I entered a speakeasy and heard the bartender, a familiar of Curly's and mine, address him by name over the telephone. Curly, it appears, had called him to inquire after a fountain-pen he had lost some days ago. Rushing up to the counter I signalled the bartender. "Let me talk to him," I said. There were four or five men at the counter; I had to restrain myself in their presence; besides, I would get nowhere if I lost my temper with Curly. When the bartender passed the instrument to me, having first said, "There's a friend of yours who wants to speak to you," I made my voice casual.

"Hello, Curly."

He answered as simply as if Jadwin and Lakin and Gitlin had never swum into our existence.

"Hello, you," he cried, "where were you last night?"

"Why?"

"I was trying to get you around twelve o'clock. You missed a grand party. I wanted you to join us."

"That's a shame," I said. "Where are you now?"

(I *think* I said "Where are you now?" I was told later that I did *not* say "Where are you now?" but "Where will you be an hour from now?" A normal person under normal conditions could not possibly construct one statement from the other, but it is possible that I was no longer in a normal condition, while it is certain that Curly was not a normal person.)

He answered: "At my kid sister's."

"Will you wait for me there?" I asked (or think I asked).

"Certainly."

I believe that I paused long enough to

telephone Jadwin again and to say triumphantly that in half an hour I would bring Curly. Then I took a taxi and rushed up to West Eighty-sixth Street. Elaine herself opened the door for me, and she seemed to be startled by my appearance.

"Is Curly here?" I asked abruptly.

"Why, no. I haven't heard from him. What's the matter?"

"Nothing," I said, wildly. "I've got to see him. I spoke to him on the phone a moment ago, and he said he was here, and would wait till I came up."

She shook her head, more in astonishment at me than in negation of my statement. I returned downtown, driven by misleading instinct to the speakeasy from which I had spoken with Curly. Then it occurred to me that I had to telephone Jadwin again, with some sort of excuse. And a few minutes later it occurred to me that I should have left word with Elaine. I called her again, to let her know what Curly was to do. It was then that she said: "Curly was here just now! He told me he spoke to you, and told you that he would be here in an hour."

"Where did he go?" I yelled.

"He only just stepped out. He'll be right back."

I'll get him, I thought. I'll get him by hook or crook, if it kills me.

I took a taxi again to West Eighty-sixth Street, and rushed up the two flights of stairs. Again Elaine met me at the door, this time with a look of profound distress on her face. "What a shame," she cried, almost wringing her hands. "He *did* come back. And then he had an important telephone call. He wants you to meet him at the Ganymede at five o'clock. He says everything is all right."

I said nothing. I did not trust myself to speak, for I was now certain that she was helping Curly to evade me. More than

that: she was helping him to demoralize me. And yet I did go to the Ganymede; for in this half-planned, half-instinctive campaign of demoralization directed against me by Curly and his sister, it was essential that occasional truths should be slipped in among the lies. There was the crux of his method: one could not rely on Curly to lie always. He would confound and confuse you with these indubitable truths.

But before I stepped into the Ganymede—or after I had been there for some time (the picture has lost its outlines)—I called up my hotel, to speak with Jadwin again. The girl at the switchboard screamed when she heard my voice.

"Oh, thank God it's you!"

"Why? What is it?" My heart leapt. For an instant I projected myself into Curly and thought he was looking for me as frantically as I was looking for him.

"Oh, something terrible, something terrible has happened. The gentleman who was waiting for you in your apartment, the gentleman who had his lunch served there—"

"Yes," I asked, breathlessly. "Yes, what is it?"

"He killed himself!"

I stood paralyzed, the receiver glued to my ear, my body against the wall of the telephone booth. I heard her say, "He jumped out of the window of your room."

I met Curly the afternoon of the next day. I had just returned from the police station, and he was waiting for me at the door of my hotel.

"Isn't that awful?" he said, without greeting.

I did not answer.

"Awful," he repeated, quietly. "Poor devil. I saw it in the paper in the morning. And can you imagine? Last night I got that job all fixed up for him."

I AM GLAD I AM DEAF

BY ARTHUR G. LEISMAN

I HAVE been deaf, utterly and absolutely, for thirty-five years. Since the age of five, I have heard no sound of that great chaos and fury which is called life; the roar of human activity has passed me by without so much as an echo. Yet today, standing at the threshold of middle-age, I scorn the slightest hint of sympathy from the world. I am glad I am deaf. By the simple process of comparing the disadvantages of deafness to its benefits, I have concluded that I am one person for whom the buffet of fate has provided the real happiness of life.

Believe it or not, there is a poetry in silence. A serene, satisfying state of living, uninterrupted by sound waves, and fraught with those intangible things we call blessings. This is the world in which I roam, the world I have grown to love. If my hearing could be returned tomorrow by some miraculous means, I would not snatch at it. In fact, I would reject it, swiftly and without regret. For contrary to popular belief, it is not a calamity to roll along life's grooves *sans* hearing. There are numberless delights and diversions if one knows how and where to find them.

I picture the reader shaking his head slowly, incredulously, recalling with telling rebuttal the things I have missed—the soul of the violin, the pleasant ring of familiar voices, the sunrise note of the robin, the swish of a hooked trout, the whisper of the wind among hemlocks. How do I know of these sounds and of

their delightful effects when I cannot recollect ever having heard them? Well, is this not sufficient proof that the ability to hear is not the only prerequisite to their enjoyment? Stuff cotton in your ears, shut yourself in a soundproof room, and you still have your delicately-tuned emotional forces to depend upon. That is why I have become so inured to deafness that I have learned to love it.

To be sure, there are deprivations, but with a correspondingly greater degree I enjoy the things that are permitted me. Peace and tranquillity of nerves are mine, like the peace found on a South Sea island where one's natural needs are satisfied. Deep sleep, unbroken by the horns of impatient motor cars and the midnight serenade of romantic cats. An insensibility to harshly-shouted words, to mysterious creaking noises in the attic, to the wails of an ailing baby, to meaningless blah-blahs emanating from the radio. When you crawl into bed at the end of a busy day, do you ever reflect how thankful you are that you can hear? Hardly. You take it as a matter of course. But, likely as not, you are quite fatigued from the constant bombardment on your eardrums at the office, and you crave quietude and relaxation. "Stop that infernal racket!" is a command you have probably had to shout more than once. And then, just as Morpheus has you in his soothing embrace, the neighbor's saxophone begins to whine. . . . Pardon me if I smile.

I can have utter silence at any and all times. A boisterous party can go on forever next door for all I care. When political bees are buzzing and citizens express themselves windily about New Dealers and Reds, when scandal-mongers wag their tongues, when lie-detectors are operating, I am dwelling in a serene seventh heaven. The fiery admonitions from a pulpit concerning damnation and eternal fire, which cause men to regret their last evening's debauch and women to fumble nervously with their handkerchiefs, fail to make a dent on my ears. In the midst of such a sermon I am apt to be speculating on the probable starting pitchers in the afternoon's ball game. During fifteen years of married life I have never heard my wife bawl me out. It is entirely likely that, because of lack of practice, she is at present incapable of doing so. Nor have I ever turned the air blue in my home with vitriolic interjections, or orally consigned a man to the category of the ignoramus. Whenever an unbidden salesman or fair-weather friend buttonholes me with the request that I lend him my ear, I am always glad to oblige. In a minute or so he is on his way.

"I wish I had your bum ears," a henpecked friend wrote me. "Then I could find some semblance of peace in my home. Let me tell you, you're lucky and don't know it."

But I do know it. As I look in the mirror while shaving and soliloquize on those pink ears of mine being useful only for ornamental purposes, the arresting thought arises that brain-fever did not play me a dirty trick when it came like a thief at night and took away my hearing. For, without being the least bit egotistical, what manner of man would I otherwise be at present? The fact that I am deaf and therefore one of the few privileged to rove

the thinly-populated world of silence, has spurred me to the pursuit of a career quite foreign to the common variety. My activities for and on behalf of fellow deaf people afford me a chance to make something of myself, with plenty of elbow room. I gain satisfaction in the realization that within my hands lies the faculty to perform functions and services for the deaf with that degree of sympathy and understanding which I could never grasp were I not one of their kind. There is an inexplicable fascination in this work—a fascination which carries with it no conscious thought of self-sacrifice. I have been speaker at state and national conventions of the deaf, have had charge of banquets for the deaf, and know the unalloyed thrill of entertaining a crowd of several hundred who hear only with their eyes. For unrestrained good humor and kindness, some of the deaf persons I know have proved themselves the best of friends. It is a pleasure to mingle with such delightful people; for this reason, perhaps, I am glad I am one of them.

I am able to read lips moderately well, but the kind of conversation I enjoy most is that which employs the sign language. Simple, unbelievably effective, and startlingly beautiful at times, it is to the deaf what a farm-yard pond is to the ducks. Anything that can be dug up in the realm of thought and feeling may be clearly revealed through this medium, and often in a far more impressive and telling manner than is possible with spoken words. If I cannot hear, I have at least mastered a language not found in any textbook, a language that has the added advantage of silence. While thus engaged with flashing fingers and waving arms, my lighted cigar can remain in its proper place and I have the assurance that no one with the keenest ears can overhear me.

With one of my five senses gone, my needs are limited, my desires easily and abundantly gratified. Eliminating from my recreational program such inconsequential items as the talkies, stage plays, concerts, and radio demonstrations, there remain automobile trips, hunting and fishing, sports events, and social gatherings of the deaf. Moreover, the time I spend with my typewriter and with books leaves me thoroughly satisfied. I love to assemble words into verses, articles, and fiction in my spare time. With so many other activities pressing me for time, I spurn that bird of ill breed, self-consciousness.

Yet it would be exaggeration to say that I have never rued my fate. Time was when I submitted to the caressing embraces of a subtle inferiority complex. Overcoming it has helped me to realize that the state of deafness itself is incapable of inflicting mental, moral, or physical harm. Time was, also, when I cowered at the mention of "deaf and dumb". But now I smile, not because of a well-developed immunity to barbed words, but more because such an utterance sometimes reveals the dumbness of the speaker himself.

Well-meaning friends have patted me on the back and spoken consolingly of my "sad loss", and in the next breath complained that because their nerves were frayed, they were eager for a sojourn in the North woods where the voice of man seldom breaks the silence. Pressed for particulars, they confess that when you hear, you must hear the bad as well as the good. Now in my silent life these features are absent. If introduced into my sphere they would inevitably detract from the wholesome pleasantries of a simple existence.

Deafness acts as a tireless sentinel outside my auditory chambers, and a very effective one too. For although in the conglomeration of sound that strives unsuccessfully for an entry, there are admittedly desirable and beneficial portions, I can well afford to get along without them, simply because they have not yet proved indispensable to my daily method of living.

All the worthwhile things that have ever been uttered or sung are preserved on paper. The immortal Gettysburg speech of Abraham Lincoln, for example, was heard by only a few, yet millions have been thrilled by its eloquence, not through the ear but through printer's ink. Music? Not all the tender airs depend for satisfying enjoyment upon normal hearing. The lyrics of Tennyson, the sonnets of Browning, and all time-tested songs can be read with the feeling that my heart is responsive to their hidden tones.

Thus, life without sound is like a deep silent river coursing leisurely through gorgeously-hued canyons and between varying patterns of landscapes, broken here and there by man-reared cities, but from all of which there is no raucous shout, no shrill whistle, no rumble of heavy traffic and geared machinery. All is serene, beautiful, naturally conducive to peace. There is no reason why I should throw myself against a wailing wall just because my hearing rates at zero. Not when I have so much liking for the benefits of deafness that I can express myself as unqualifiedly in favor of a silent life as opposed to that which might have been. It is just as easy as switching off my bedside reading lamp and lying down to pleasant soundless dreams.



INVITATION TO MONARCHY

BY RALPH ADAMS CRAM

DURING the last ten years there has been a most astonishing avalanche of books scrutinizing social, industrial, and political democracy, all of them explicitly or by inference challenging its assumptions and drastically condemning its works. To name only a few of the authors who come from many lands, we have: Spengler, Ortega y Gasset, Berdyaev, Orton, Niebuhr, Agar, Nock. All these men of open eyes and active minds are devotees of liberty; they recognize the unescapable fact that under democracy we have lost this liberty, or are losing it with ever-increasing momentum, together with many other highly desirable commodities in the social sphere. Their power of analysis is admirable, their capacity for characterization and denunciation (Messrs. Agar and Nock, for example) highly edifying, but curiously enough they one and all seem able to envisage only two possible destinies for disintegrating democracy, either of which may perfectly well happen, both of which are equally repulsive: communism or fascism.

So it is not from these high-minded and sometimes highly excitable students (with the single but brilliant exception of Professor Berdyaev) that the suggestion of a revived monarchism issues, but rather from such unexpected sources as quite commonplace citizens, voters, formal adherents of some political party or other; from practical men of business, teachers of economics or sociology, common work-

men, and the man on the street. It is from the people at this end of the scale that there has come the query: Is not some form of monarchy the best and most effective form of political and social organization, and to kingship shall we not ultimately—and almost immediately—return? This is significant, and the subject is (I think) worth pursuing a little further.

In the light of this new leading, my memory of old days is clarified, and I call to mind a period, now some forty years gone, when those men with whom I was then associated were convinced monarchists, not to say Legitimists and Jacobites. This was at the very meridian of the age of Triumphant Democracy, and to none of us, I fancy, was it more than a pious aspiration; certainly we did not quite expect to be taken seriously, nor, it is hardly necessary to say, were we so taken. Certainly, also, we dared not envisage a time, hardly more than a generation in the future, when serious-minded men of twice our years (as they were then) would pose the question and give it an affirmative answer.

Perhaps if, back in the very last days of the closing century, we had for one mad moment foreseen the progressive degeneration of the parliamentary system of government and the dark discredit to be cast on social and political democracy by its own revealing actions, as these were to be accomplished in the coming and im-

mediate years, our hopes would have been better. Nothing of the sort was vouchsafed us. We were, I suppose, less the prophets of what was to come than the last ripples of the dying wave of Romanticism. Our monarchical bent was romantic, sentimental, decorative, rather than the issue of a critical and philosophical estimate of existing conditions and a drawing of conclusions therefrom. As a matter of fact, we should have been rather superhuman in point of intelligence (which we most certainly were not) had we deduced from the evidence any conclusions that would have indicated what was really about to take place. At that time everything, particularly democracy, was going strong. Civilization was on the upgrade under the determining impulse of progressive evolution, and the only threat to the equally progressive democratization of the world was a possible, though hardly probable, declension of the crescent socialism on anarchy.

There were kings pretty much everywhere, except in France and the United States and South America, but they were without exception *rois fainéants*, negligible quantities, except where their personal character gave them an unofficial status; and one saw signs indicating their ultimate liquidation by a process of peaceful penetration by parliaments ever growing stronger (in craft if not in character) and establishing themselves, apparently, in perpetuity. This was not the sort of kingship we had in mind, so, perforce, we went back to certain model kings (or those we held to be such) of older and happier times. Such, for example, as St. Louis, René of Anjou, Frederick II as King of Sicily, Charles I of England. There was glamor about them all. We liked this saving grace of personality and found little enough of it, either in our physical or

spiritual environment (I am writing of the late 'Eighties) and none at all in the "Thrones, Dominations, Kingdoms, Powers" (political) of that particular period of civilization.

Then some of us began to penetrate beneath the glamor, though formal histories and biographies gave little aid, for the accepted chroniclers for a century or more had been stanchly—not to say unscrupulously—anti-monarchical, while they based their conclusions on an unwholesome blend of congenital myopia and an uncritical reliance on original documents, the latter, notoriously, the least reliable of all historical sources of accurate information. Nevertheless, we got what we wanted (the word is deliberately chosen) in spite of Macaulay, Carlyle, Froude, and their propagandist ilk, and discovered that, for example, Charles I was a patriot, statesman, and martyr, and that Van Dyck and the *Icon Basiliæ* actually showed him as he was: an idealist and great gentleman, fighting for justice and the poorer and more Christian of his people, against as sorry a cabal of sportsmen, profiteers, receivers of stolen goods, and sour sectaries as ever assailed a high-minded king. This was pretty good, and we kept on until we built up our galaxy of patriot kings and then, I am free to admit, attributed their virtues to many others of their calling, of whom less could be said in praise. We stopped, however, before we reached the reigning sovereigns of the day (with the exception of Leo XIII, who ranked as high as any) because we found them unhandsome and generally impotent, and this sort of thing did not fit into our picture.

Then democracy achieved its perfect work: one throne after another was vacated, the very idea of kingship fell into the limbo of archaeology, and at last came

the Armageddon of the year of grace, 1918-19, and after that those of us who retained our faith could only sit in the shadow and "tell sad stories of the death of kings". And now, as I said in the beginning, the kings may not have come back (two, at least, are hurriedly on the way) but the idea has, and from Ortega y Gasset and Nicholas Berdyaev to the newspaper correspondents, this same idea is being brought forward, and apparently without protest.

Perhaps, after all, this phenomenon is not so surprising. Democratic governmental methods and practices began to corrupt first of all here in the United States just after the Civil War: then Continental governments followed the same course, with added refinements, and finally the parliamentary system, since the World War, has dissolved in such a witches' sabbath of incompetence, ineptitude, and venality that it has been thrown into the discard and, apart from England, France, and the admirable Scandinavian kingdoms, all Europe has accepted dictatorships as the lesser of two evils. No wonder, then, that the alternative, good sound monarchy, suggests itself to those who have no taste for parliaments, dictatorships, or soviets.

For this astonishing phenomenon is now prevalent. At the very moment when there are fewer reigning monarchs than at any time since the close of the Dark Ages, here, there, and everywhere are heard not only whispers of republican disloyalty and tentative suggestions that after all there may have been something in the monarchical idea, but clearly-vocalized statements to the effect that we, even we ourselves, at the close of the Century of Progress and before the sepulcher of triumphant democracy, could do very well with a king "happy and glorious long to

reign over us". And these subversive sentiments are voiced not alone by the high-brow and the political theorist, but very frequently by the man in the street, who at last seems to be doing a little thinking for himself.

II

During the great debacle that befell when peace, with all its horrors, broke out over Europe when the guns ceased fire in 1918, the fall or flight of a king from his throne was hailed by the newspapers and other organs of public opinion (how exact is the phrase!) as an act of God—or more correctly of Demos, who then held a position of greater honor and respect. Now the case is quite different and the surviving sovereigns are treated with respect and even affection. True, they are rather a picked lot, but even the kings in exile, with one or two exceptions, are subject to no disfavor. When the King of England celebrates his Jubilee, the whole world (the Irish Republic excepted) pays him honor, not to say adoration, and all the magnificent and medieval panoply of high kingship is avidly, even enviously regarded by the citizenry of this Republic. Somehow behind the glittering show, men seem to sense reality; there are stirrings of an older memory, for a few generations—they really are hardly more than decades—cannot wholly nullify the inheritance of five millenniums. After all, republicanism is a very bourgeois, *nouveau riche* affair. After its first rather hysterical manifestations, it was increasingly afflicted with an inferiority complex, and now that it has before its eyes what it has led to, whether in the shape of contemporary parliaments or the salving but uncomfortable dictatorships, its complex is merging rapidly into what Evangelicals

used to call "conviction of sin". So far as the office-holders and legislators are concerned, this is, where and if it exists, an interior emotion; the prime necessity of retaining their jobs quite estops them from any form of outward expression.

Now I frankly associate myself with those who believe that monarchy is a better system of civil government than democracy. I began to think this long ago when parliamentary governments, based on universal suffrage, seemed still to be working fairly well; I mean during the 'Nineties of the last century. Study of the theory and scheme of government became rather a cherished avocation, as soon as I got beyond the glamor of romantic monarchy. Through the framing of the American Constitution, I worked back by way of English government and the French Revolution to the Renaissance monarchies (which set me back a bit, they were so obviously out of key with the fundamental principles of justice and liberty) and so to the free kingship of the Middle Ages. Once there it did not seem necessary to go farther, for a sane model then came into view. The study of political theory in the Middle Ages, and of its practical working-out, is illuminating and, as well, a commentary on the lack of intelligence, or the deliberate propagandism of the writers on this subject in the nineteenth century.

Back in those delectable 'Nineties, we knew very little about medieval political theory, or any other, for that matter; we were working on theory and emotion, which, after all, is not a bad basis to start on—if it is abandoned in good season. We indulged in no vain hopes and I fancy that the two things that seemed to us most nearly impossible were that within fifty years, democracy and parliamentary governments would break up in im-

potence and futility over the greater part of the world, giving place to dictatorships, and that at the expiration of that period, there would be a real revival of monarchical sentiment frankly expressed and without any outburst of popular indignation. Well, exactly that has happened, and so I indite this inquiring into how it all came about, and why after all monarchy is the best working system.

The answer to the first question is easy enough: it is simply that the representative, parliamentary system, based on universal suffrage, with a chief executive elected for a brief term by party votes and by party methods, has come a most terrible cropper, the results being so deplorable and so obvious that in sheer self-defense, the erstwhile democratic states have been forced to accept the monarchical idea not in its absolutist form, but in the rather unpleasant guise of dictatorships. True, the dictator possesses some of the essential qualities and powers of a king, but he has also, by his very nature, some of the worst as well. His achievement of power is based on force—or the threat of force; his tenure of office is insecure; he has no contractual relation with his people, and his will is law. In a word, he is not a patriot king, but a Renaissance despot.

I am not quarreling with current dictatorships—at least not with all of them—for they were and are emergency measures, conceived in desperation. They saved the day wherever they were established, but it would be a most unpleasant thought to have to look on them as permanent institutions. Thinking things through is not an habitual practice of mankind at large, and so I doubt if very many realize that dictatorships are the first steps towards monarchy, taken in a sort of panic induced by a sudden reali-

zation of what has happened to democracy—and what is going to happen next. Having got a dictatorship, man is as little pleased as he was after he got democracy—and had his experience of it for a considerable period. He can't go back to democracy; the memory is too close and too poignant. He must take the next step and this, of course, leads, as it always has done in the past, to monarchy. Some few realize this, but most men confront a dilemma. The very word frightens them, because they do not look back far enough. They see, conjured up by the word, English Georges, French Bourbons, German Hohenzollerns, Italian tyrants of the Renaissance—all the unhandsome despots who came to power after Medievalism had perished. The picture is neither alluring nor convincing, and it is also very misleading.

Now authentic kingship is a very different matter and there is nothing in it at all alarming, while it may easily be used to make democracy possible (which democracy itself does not), to insure liberty and to assure a measure of order, justice, and the good life. Medieval political theory was based on three firm foundation stones. One: that the object of government was to insure justice. Two: that society, from the household up, must find its focus in one man—father, count, duke, king, emperor—and in this solitary individual, society, in its several unitary forms, incarnates itself and achieves its dynamic symbol. Three: that all authority came from God; that therefore a king ruled by divine right, but this divine right gave no authority to rule evilly or unjustly. Who were to judge and determine this question? The subjects who were ruled. The decision lay with them and they knew how to enforce it. The which is very good democracy.

III

Now to make practical application of this to our present estate. During the last two decades, we have had a sufficiently clear demonstration that the democratic-republican system of government no longer works. This is not necessarily to say that it never did, but that is another story. The reasons for its present failure would seem to be these: The system is based on the false theory that "all men are and of right ought to be free and equal"; that man, by an inscrutable law of the unknowable, is proceeding through the method of progressive evolution to ever higher and higher things; that the electoral franchise is not a privilege but an inalienable right of man; that the majority is generally right, but the majority, right or wrong, must rule. These premises are all disproved by history and experience, but they are bred in the bone of the general public and they are the means whereby politicians live, therefore they are as the laws of the Medes and Persians. They are, some of them, but not all, as is generally supposed, embedded in the original Constitution of 1787; those that are not there have been inserted by means of the Amendments promulgated since the compilation of the Bill of Rights, and this amended (and shockingly distorted) Constitution has become a fetish and sacrosanct. The Constitution was framed for some three million agrarian citizens of thirteen sovereign states. It was intended to adapt itself to changing conditions and ample provision was made for this. Unfortunately—as I have tried to show in an earlier article*—every amendment subsequent to the Thirteenth was adopted as a sort of emergency measure,

* *Back to What Constitution?* The American Mercury, December, 1935.

and the trail of popular passion, uninformed public opinion, and political expediency is over them all.

The strongest point in the original Constitution was the power given into the hands of the President. It is now the weakest. In 1787, party government, in the sense in which we have experienced it since the election of Andrew Jackson, was unthought of. Indeed, the original Constitution provided that the candidate receiving the largest number of votes should be President; the candidate having the next largest number, Vice-President. The President was to represent the people as a whole, without regard to party, and the Framers thought they had provided for this by the device of the Electoral College. Of course, the people themselves were not to vote directly for President, in spite of the fact that the electorate was then a restricted and select body. The intent, and the expectation, was that the several states would choose their wisest men as members of the Electoral College and that these disinterested citizens would, in turn, select the one man who could best serve the Republic. It was assumed that he would be re-elected for an indefinite number of terms, provided he ruled acceptably.

In 1787 this was a conservative and altogether admirable scheme; but by constitutional amendment, the force of precedent, and a transformed public opinion consequent on a completely revolutionized racial stock, universal suffrage, and the new financial and industrial system, it has now been so altered that it bears no resemblance to the original. What the majority of the Founders wanted was a sovereign similar to the English King but without the title. What we have got is a party boss raised to high eminence and given certain powers greater than those

held by the nominal kings of the nineteenth century. After the first great quarrel from Washington to John Quincy Adams, it is hard to count more than five who rose above this level. Andrew Jackson did (personally I hold him to have been the evil genius of the Republic), and so also did Lincoln, Cleveland, Wilson and the first Roosevelt. Few fell to the low level of Grant and Harding, but mostly they were party leaders and therefore subservient to party. This is not enough now when parliaments have come to be what they are and the common life what it is, as well as the electorate and the public opinion it engenders under the influence of mob psychology.

Here, then, is the first proposition: In a well-ordered and free society, where liberty is a prime requisite and justice the object of government, the Chief of State must not be the head of a political party. He must not owe his office to partisan action, nor must he be dependent on party favor for continuance in office. He, himself, must represent the whole people and the State as a unitary and living organism. This means that he must hold office for life—or as the phrase goes, for good behavior. He must be chosen by methods as nearly unpartisan as possible, perhaps by some device similar to the original Electoral College, its capture by political parties rigidly guarded against, but never, certainly, by popular vote. Two new prerogatives must be given him: initiative in legislation and authority to dissolve either or both of the legislative bodies in the event that a government bill which, in his opinion, supported by his cabinet or ministry, is vital to the welfare of the nation, fails of passage, or a legislative bill (there must be room for such once the more important government agenda is disposed of) is passed over his veto.

These new prerogatives are all that is necessary to transform the President into a sovereign who would be a true Chief of State. The suggested initiative in legislation means only that with the advice and consent of his cabinet, he presents before each session of the legislative bodies an agenda of such bills as are considered necessary to the welfare of the country, which bills cannot be referred to committee but must be debated in the open and either passed, amended and passed, or refused, after which private bills may be introduced and dealt with as at present. Power to dissolve the legislative chambers and order a new election throws the moot question back on the people where, in the end, in all sound forms of government, the ultimate sanction must rest. If they fail to support the Government, then that is the end of the matter.

Of course this strengthening of the sovereign power would not alone guarantee good government, though it would go far to this end. Many other reforms are necessary, such as the total abolition of the lobby, the elimination of some of the foolish and intolerable rules of the legislative chambers (such as those that permit riders and filibusters), and particularly the restoration of the electoral franchise to its original status as a privilege and a duty, not a natural right. These, however, have no place in this essay, which is intended to deal only with the question of kingship and its superiority to an elected and partisan presidency. I propose to take up these matters at another time.

The releasing of the Chief of State from all party affiliations would go far towards giving him status as the personification of the State in the consciousness of the people, and this is as important a considera-

tion as his prerogatives. The most vital factor in kingship is just this incarnation in one visible individual, of the tradition of a people, their patriotism, their ideals, and their aspirations. This is why a king of today, like him of England, though shorn of nearly all his just prerogatives, is still in the eyes of his people the august and honored personification of the State; a cohesive and inspiring force in secular society. This centralizing of a national idea in one personality is a basic factor in any well-ordered polity. There is no valid substitute. You cannot make a flag, a slogan, or an anthem take its place. Efforts towards this end are always failures and with results that are frequently ridiculous.

Under normal circumstances a President chosen as such-like are chosen today, cannot play this part. The candidate who is seen maneuvering for nomination, working to secure pledges and delegates, giving promises and negotiating deals with other politicians, rushing over the country in "whirlwind campaigns", broadcasting eloquent addresses to every known type of citizen, hedging diplomatically here, "viewing with alarm" there: the "little friend of all the world" (of his own party) until the votes are counted—such an one may give an entertaining show, arouse the facile admiration of the go-getter for his similar qualities, but he can never personify the State. Elected, he can never slough off the ignominious connotations of the political campaign. He is always the head of his party, not the head of his people in their inner consciousness. Never, unless, on occasion, he achieves martyrdom, and then only posthumously—and then not always. Lincoln gained this sad honor, but only he; not even Wilson in the tragedy of his end. Once a politician, always a politician. But

what the people, the community, the state need and should have, is *their* man, not the parties' choice. This may be why, all unconsciously, they reject every President — sooner or later — as their head and their leader, accepting him only as just another politician who, for his party or for his adherents, can get results in the field of material benefits.

It is not enough, then, that the Chief of State should be given added powers and prerogatives of sovereignty and be released from all partisan ties. He must assume that title and state which are consonant with his dignity, and function as the State incarnate. A President is by title the fellow of the president of a chamber of commerce, a railway system, or a social club. Words are symbols and they are dynamic in their power of suggestion; therefore they are to be reckoned with. A president presides; a true chief of state leads, directs, and inspires. By association, which has been part of human consciousness for at least four thousand years, the word King, or its linguistic equivalents, has meant just this, and so long as the mind of man is what it is, you cannot make the word President, or its equivalent, take its place. This, of course, is why when a democracy goes to pieces, as in time it always does, the strong man who comes into power to redeem the consequent social loss and build a new state, always takes the title, not of President but of Emperor, *Duce*, *Führer*, or, most logically, King.

And with the fact, the title, and the estate, must go the forms, ceremonies, ritual, and vesture that show in visible form the quality of this kingship that is so much more than a faculty of govern-

ment. All these things are symbols, as the flag or the other inanimate details are symbols, with the difference that they are more universal and at the same time personal in their significance and appeal. They are not employed for ostentation or for the magnifying of the individual, any more than are the sacerdotal vestments of the priest at the altar, the robes of the judges on the bench, the gowns of scholastics, or the secular dress clothes for formal occasions. To resent them is snobbish and vulgar. We have our own ceremonial today: hat on the heart or handkerchief fluttered in the air when the flag goes by; military salutes of rifle, sword, cannon, and bunting; the weird habiliments of secret societies, grips, and passwords. But the old and splendid ceremonial of a royal progress, as at the recent funeral of the British King, is more noble, significant, beautiful, and spiritually stimulating.

And so, after this interlude of well-meant but futile democracy of the modern sort, we should do well to return to the old kingship. Not that of the Renaissance autocracies, which was the debasement of sovereignty, but to the elder sort under which a real democracy was not only possible but well assured. There may be liberty under a right monarchy: there has come a sort of slavery under the democracies of the modern form where a political oligarchy and a money oligarchy, now in alliance, now in conflict, have brought about grave disorder, social chaos, and the negation of the free and the good life, under the forms of a free commonwealth founded on assumptions that are baseless biologically, philosophically, historically, and from the standpoint of plain commonsense.



THE CLINIC

Rats

BY HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

IRONICAL as it may seem, the animal whose name is a synonym for everything contemptible in the human vocabulary is, in many essential respects, the most similar of all animals to man. At the basis of this similarity is the fact that men and rats are the only completely omnivorous animals on earth. They and they alone will eat anything and everything: meat, cereal, fruits, nuts, eggs, fish, and if nothing else is available—each other. Moreover, mammals having the same food habits are known to develop close similarities in their nervous and nutritional processes. Thus, the same diseases attack them; both rats and men, for example, are highly susceptible to a virulent type of cancer. They both can live in any climate from torrid to polar, and under conditions that would spell death to other creatures. And this strange parallel goes beyond mere physical adaptability; Hans Zinsser, author of *Rats, Lice and History*, declares that rats and men have precisely the same attitude toward all the rest of creation. They are completely useless to other forms of animal life which they impartially destroy by their audacity, ferocity, and resourcefulness.

It was because of the identical eating habits of rats and men that a group of biologists decided, about twenty-five years ago, to utilize the rat as the ideal experimental animal. So now, at the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, University of Pennsylvania, specially-constructed

steel and concrete buildings are devoted to the breeding and study of a perfect race of *Mus Norvegicus albinus*, free from flaws and disease. In experiments involving human conclusions, the Wistar standardized white rat has proved itself superior to guinea pigs, dogs, monkeys, or rabbits. Under the direction of Dr. H. H. Donaldson, the world's foremost authority on white rats, ninety-six generations have been bred under approximately ideal conditions. Their food is scientifically balanced and prepared; their air is filtered and sterilized. No visitors are allowed; they might contaminate the rats, and thus invalidate years of laboratory research. The Wistar Institute supplies virtually all white rats used by scientists today, at \$45 per hundred, f.o.b. Philadelphia.

Business is brisk. For without the services of *Mus Norvegicus*, the scientific laboratories might just as well close up shop. On this pink-eyed, white-furred rodent—an offshoot of the pugnacious brown Norway rat—scientists have performed more experiments than upon all other animals combined. They make him run in a revolving cage until he is exhausted, then observe the effects of fatigue upon his sex life. They expose him to leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis, and pneumonia, and watch him "take it". In the nutritional field *Mus* is the preferred subject of metabolic research: groups are fed all the vitamins, a few vitamins, no vitamins at all; at the end of each experiment their tiny bones

are measured and their most minute organs weighed. To plumb the mysterious workings of the animal mind, the rats are placed in the center of an intricate labyrinth and clocked as they puzzle their way out. For data on blood-pressure and other circulatory changes under emotional stress, biochemists throw them into "an experimental rage", then draw off their blood, analyze it, and compare it with the blood of their tranquil cheese-gnawing brothers. With the single exception of man himself, more scientific papers have been written about the rat than about any other mammal on earth.

This pest-bearer, who has killed more people with the bubonic plague than all the wars since 400 B.C., has a brief but eventful life in the laboratory. After a gestation period of twenty-two to twenty-three days it is born blind, hairless, with a short tail and undeveloped limbs. It can barely squeak and suckle, yet from the day of its birth it is constantly seeking something, a trait observed in no other animal save man. The eyes of the female open first; at the age of ten days the young pups begin to roam about their cage. At twenty-five days the rat is independent of its parents, and its subsequent development — both mental and physical — is extremely rapid. The life span of the white rat is about three years, which corresponds to ninety years of human life; thus the rat develops thirty times faster than man, and by the use of an equivalent age scale, results obtained from rats can be precisely transferred to men. The ninety-six generations of rats observed at the Wistar Institute correspond to 3100 years of human life (allowing three generations to a century), or a period longer than all recorded history.

Mus Norvegicus is proverbially fertile; a good breeding female will produce about

ten litters in a lifetime; the offspring of a sturdy pair will number fifteen million in five years. Contrary to popular belief, inbreeding does not weaken the stock; experiments with fifty generations demonstrate that if a start is made with a vigorous pair, and the best of the offspring are selected for mating, the descendants will be heavier, stronger, and longer-lived than their ancestors. Because of the rat's fertility and ability to breed true to type, it is the preferred animal in any study of human genetics. Whereas it would require almost a century to observe three human generations, rats tell the same story in eighteen months.

Practically all our knowledge of food values has been derived from experiments on these rodent replicas of man. The manganese deficiency tests made by E. V. McCollum of the School of Hygiene and Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, are particularly illuminating. He wished to determine how human beings would be affected if manganese — an element found chiefly in cereals, blueberries, nuts, and meat — was omitted from the diet. First, of course, it was necessary to provide an adequate life-sustaining diet free of manganese. By the spectrographic method of examination, the following foods were selected: starch, sucrose, butter-fat, sodium chloride, and vitamins A, D, and E. Four different diets were fed to groups of young rats: first, a manganese-free diet; second, a control diet containing substances with a natural manganese content; and third and fourth, manganese-free diets, supplemented by manganese artificially prepared.

All the rats grew to maturity and those on a manganese-free diet did not apparently differ from the others. They looked, weighed, and reproduced alike. Two things were noticeable, however. The females had no milk with which to suckle

their young. The males showed no abnormality till the hundredth day, when testicular degeneration appeared; from that time forward, progressive atrophy continued, ending in complete sterility. Male sexual potency was restored by the addition of manganese to the diet. McCollum accordingly concluded (and his findings were afterwards substantiated in human experiments) that manganese is essential in the production of the hormone which regulates the function of the testes in the male and the mammary tissue in the female.

When a new drug, serum, or poison, is discovered, it is first tried out on *Mus Norvegicus* to determine the medicinal and lethal doses. Since a fully-grown rat weighs about half a pound, or approximately 1/250 as much as a man, a fractional dose in this proportion is administered, and its effects gauged. If all goes well with the rodent, increasing doses are administered until the lethal point is reached. The first studies in the use of morphine, and many subsequent tests of snake venoms and other poisons, were made on white rats. In certain forms of cancer research, notably in "tar cancer", the rodent subject is indispensable. Virulent cancerous

growths are easily grafted from one rat to another. Even "ratinin", the poison that has no harmful effect on livestock or human beings, was discovered only after thousands of laboratory rats had been used in experiments.

Yet in the wild state, the rat is still a serious menace to life and property, destroying over five billion dollars' worth of goods each year. But the scientists who work with white rats in the laboratory say that when they are "gentled"—that is, freed from the terror of human beings—they are as playful and affectionate as children. They like to be petted, and one authority goes so far as to declare that they are extremely fond of music and will click their teeth in audible appreciation.

The white rats at the Wistar Institute will eventually produce a pure-bred, disease-free strain of animals raised under optimum conditions. What happens to a perfect race at last? Are the mental and physical changes desirable, unlimited, harmonious? We may ultimately find in the perfection of *Mus Norvegicus* some definite clues as to what might reasonably be expected of the human race if it were rendered entirely free of disease for a few hundred years.



Solace for Lonely Hearts

BY JUDITH RAVEL

SOME shrewd fellow in his recent musings on human nature awoke to two incontrovertible facts. People want to be happy, and people like to receive letters. Forthwith he established a correspondence club, and the mail came rolling in. Letters from ministers, doctors, teachers, farmers, business men, and housewives, all

responding to a sentence in his circular—"by joining the —— Correspondence Club, you will form friendships, and Life will take on a beautiful significance".

The appeal is universal; most of us want life to take on some other significance besides the one which it seems to hold. If, by filling out a questionnaire and

sending off two dollars to a correspondence exchange, we can detect the throb of some heart beating in unison with our own, why not? Thus, writing clubs have lately sprung up from Maine to California, sponsored mostly by sincere altruists, who hope, after the publicity, postage, and stationery have been paid for, to show a small profit. These friendship exchanges, or happiness centers hold themselves haughtily aloof from matrimonial bureaus, and in their circulars emphasize the fact, stating that, once two members have met via the mailbox, the club's responsibility is at an end. "Of course," several have admitted coyly, "when you bring two congenial people together, sometimes they just *will* marry." As one director explains, his club seeks "to keep out married flirts".

The principle of operating these institutions is simple. An advertisement is inserted in the pulp magazines, or in several of the more intellectual journals, reading: "Lonesome? Let us arrange a correspondence for you", or "The-Get-Together Club. Reliable members everywhere. Write for sealed particulars." The applicant receives a prospectus, full of encouragement. "Act at once! Happiness awaits you!" "No more lonely Hours!" "Develop that happy attitude of mind that comes from holding out a sympathetic hand and in new friendships receive your reward. Satisfy that eternal longing in your heart. Feel the singing rhythm of living. Let us bring the zest and happiness of new interests into YOUR life." Accompanying this is a questionnaire, demanding the name, age, occupation, height, weight, nationality, religion, education, and preferences of the applicant. This, enclosed with the fee — two to five dollars for men and one to four dollars for women — will bring a membership card and a list of desirable names to

which the bidder for happiness may write. His or her name also appears on a similar list which is sent to other members. Having supplied lonely hearts with this means of mitigating sorrow, the club's activity ceases.

At first blush, this business sounds entertaining, profitable, and somewhat like a racket, but inquiries have shown that the recompense for the enormous amount of clerical work required is relatively slight, and that competition is pretty stiff. Many of the directors continue simply for the joy of the work, rather than for any vast profits. The roster of club founders includes a widow past middle-life in the South, a college graduate, a soldier in the United States Army, two enterprising young women in New York City, a business-like couple in the West, an amateur writer on the Pacific Coast, and an energetic lady of good antecedents in Detroit. These are typical. One club, founded six months ago, boasts a membership of sixty-nine, and caters almost exclusively to teachers, students, authors, lecturers, lawyers, and business people. Most of the letter writers confine themselves to such safe topics as music, writing, flower culture, and sports. One of the oldest and most flourishing clubs serves no less than 20,000 clients yearly. The members occasionally marry each other, although the main business of the organizers is avowedly to see that two people are introduced to each other, and no more. On the mailing list are ministers, geologists, oil-drillers, doctors, nurses, dietitians, miners, laborers, ranchers, waitresses, housekeepers, actresses, hotel keepers, *ad infinitum*. The efficient lady who conducts this club says that she has had many visitors personally, and has yet to receive a complaint.

There seem to be as many men as women writing throughout America, and

as many city dwellers as country cousins. The median age in most clubs is twenty-nine to thirty-three, although the range on the whole is astounding. A specimen list furnished by one of the newer clubs contains a cross-section of these writers.

Number 172, female, 23, teaches, is single, and seeking to overcome inhibitions instilled by early training.

Number 237, male, single, 40, is a former deputy sheriff, interested in social justice for all classes. He adds that his favorite movie actress is Mae West.

Number 301, male, 34, is a farmer and single. He is interested in fencing and roughing it, and wishes a life companion to aid him in star-gazing.

Number 250, female, 36-ish, a Jewess full of the old Ned and loves to tease. Her sole possession is a model T Ford.

Number 422, male, widower, 57, sounds like a menace. He is a cruise director, a lover of music, firesides, and Southern skies, with a yen for wine, women, and song.

Number 173, female, over 21, church worker and single, but not very devout. She loves dancing, reading, swimming, tennis, poetry, and moonlight trips.

A club will often find these individuals just what they are looking for.

"So far all of the letters which you forwarded to me from other members were of a most excellent caliber", reads one epistle to a club director. "Especially among the lady members, there are some very fine minds indeed".

"I would like to express my appreciation of the ——— Club," says another. "There are only one or two of those whom I wrote who have continued, but those I have found worthwhile. It has afforded me a means of at least temporary escape from a depressing atmosphere".

And another: "Kindly remove my

name from the list of correspondents as I have met one of the most beautiful and wonderful women God ever made".

Still another reports: "I have met and cultivated the formal friendship of a number of the lady members, and am pleased to state that they are much above the average in character, sincerity and intelligence. I have been fortunate in meeting a fine Christian woman, well-educated, refined & a fine musician, in whom I find my ideal. We are mutually happy and have been absolutely honest & frank with each other, & I believe I will find a permanent companionship entirely agreeable and a source of perfect earthly happiness".

For real romance, however, one must consider the innumerable matrimonial clubs, which have flourished for a considerably longer period than the new friendship exchanges. One of the most successful of these openly commercial centers for traffic in romance operates on the usual membership plan—gentlemen \$2, ladies \$1. The club wastes no time in prating about friendship or congenial interests. Its prospectus begins: "Have you realized the Love Dream of your life?" and proceeds in no uncertain terms to outline the bliss which awaits future members. "Introductions by mail, by which love-hungry men and women enjoy the fulfillment of their rightful share of love and happiness, have come to break the monotony of loneliness and means everything to your future life and contentment. It opens the pathway to secret Thrills, Romance, Enchantment, Intimate Joys, Exciting Cheerful Courtships, Faithful and Enduring Love, from which you pass on to the Triumphs of Another Life full of bloom and moments which you scarcely dared dream of".

There are certain safeguards which the directors of matrimonial clubs adopt for the protection of members. They insist that

all applicants be of the white race, and refuse membership to those "who are not sincere and honorable in their intentions". Their questionnaires are much more exhaustive than those of the friendship exchanges. They wish to know about church membership, hobbies, preferences as to city or country life, and preferred occupations. There are also discreet questions as to finances. Color of hair, eyes, height, and above all *weight*, seem to be determining factors in predisposing strangers. A fair example of the average clients are the following would-be husbands:

L. G., widower, 52, German-American, weighs 190 pounds, 5 feet 11 inches, dark complexion, has a delicatessen store and other assets, would be content with either city or country life with a lady who has average business ability, 38 to 45 years of age, with a likable personality.

M. F. turns out to be a young bachelor, 33 years old, 5 feet 9 inches, 150 pounds, blue eyes, looks very distinguished. He is a mechanical engineer, and feels that he wants to settle down to a real home with a warmhearted woman.

P. B. is single, 21, 6 feet tall, 170 pounds, Irish descent, witty and very jolly. Likes mechanical work and farming, could enjoy himself anywhere with a love-mate, brunette type. Prefers a single girl, but has no objection to a widow with one child.

A. A., widower, 42, 5 feet 6 inches, 140 pounds, has "a peaches and cream complexion" and beautiful blue eyes, is of English nationality, has his own home, a modern car, other property of value, and steady employment. He wishes to correspond for pleasure and what may follow, as he is very lonesome. Has a considerate disposition, is a tasty dresser, nice-looking, home-loving, and enjoys the best of health.

While there are undoubtedly many professional people who find "helpful Soul

Mates" through this medium, a classification of letters shows that it is C.C.C. workers, garage mechanics, proprietors of small businesses, doormen, nightwatchmen, or chefs to whom the idea of "a real sweetheart by mail" appeals. Their feminine counterparts, as indicated by the female listing of this same club, include a widow, 61, who is a good cook and housekeeper, has a nice disposition, and prefers a Protestant professional or business man in a small town; a business school graduate; a public stenographer; another widow, 37, who plays the piano and is very partial to blond men; a widow, 59, now employed as a nurse; a gay divorcée of 120 pounds; a lady of 25 with property; several matrons in homes or boys' clubs; another stenographer and private secretary; a beauty parlor operator; and a handsome brunette of 30, who wants to secure Friendship and Romance while she is yet young enough to enjoy it.

It is impossible to estimate how many happy lovers embark on matrimony as a result of correspondence courtship; the directors of matrimonial bureaus can only refer to letters which arrive from satisfied customers.

"Please take my name off of your list, as I have found the nicest man a girl could want. I certainly am happy, and want to thank you for this."

And, "Enclosed find photo for reference of our family. If you remember, you introduced us several years ago, and we are happily married."

And again, "I thought I would let you know we were married and happy. We married last Tuesday and want to thank you so very much."

Busy people, who have hosts of friends, may turn up their noses at the idea of joining a correspondence club. But to widows and widowers in small towns,

girls and men in cities or on farms, the results of this craze for letter-writing have been a Godsend. The codes of social con-

vention have nothing to do with the case. When lonely hearts shriek for solace, what harm in supplying comfort?



Who Owns Yellowstone Park?

BY A. C. McINTOSH

EACH year thousands of Americans, harassed by the increasing complexity of existence and eager to Get Away From It All, pay a visit to Yellowstone National Park. There, beside clear streams and lakes, in cool forests, amid the grandeur of waterfall, canyon and mountain, the more or less bewildered citizen seeks re-creation, and strives to view both himself and his machine-ridden civilization in true perspective. Unfortunately he finds not only tranquil scenic beauty, but predatory money-changers as well. The latter have been at the park almost from the beginning, "helping the traveler, rendering indispensable service." In Yellowstone one may still view near the Daisy geyser a record of the early vested interests: the debris of a tent camp in the days before the horseless carriage.

Odd as it may seem today, President Grant in 1872 signed the first Yellowstone Park Act, setting apart the vast wilderness tract as a "public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people." The bill further provided for the preservation of the forests, natural curiosities or wonders, and against the "wanton destruction of fish and game." It was a lofty idea, a panegyric in defense of the great free outdoors. However, things have changed in the last sixty years. Big Business has taken charge.

At present the principal monopolies of Yellowstone are the Yellowstone Park

Hotel Company, with four large hotels; the Yellowstone Park Lodge and Camps Company, operating several lodges, cafeterias, and some 2000 lodge and house-keeping cabins; the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, controlling bus transportation in the park; the Haynes Picture Shops; and the Hamilton Stores. There are several other minor operators. In most cases the companies hold twenty-year franchises and in theory, mild theory, they are subject to regulation by the National Park Service. During the fiscal year 1932-33 the franchise and permit fees derived from all Yellowstone operators totaled \$29,551.18, and in the following fiscal year receipts from the same source were \$25,072.54. Tourists entering the park in automobiles paid more than \$114,000 in fees during 1932-33, \$135,000 the succeeding year, and \$163,000 during 1934-35. More than 71,000 automobiles entered the park during the 1935 season. Fees no doubt passed the \$200,000 mark. However, what the operators paid in 1934-35 had not been made public at the time this article was written.

Federal appropriations for maintenance in recent years have averaged \$500,000 annually, and for 1933-35 the government allocated an additional \$3,000,000 to permit extensive highway construction. Obviously, the annual payments of \$25,000 to \$30,000 made by the operators during the fiscal years 1932-33 and 1933-34 constitute

but an insignificant fraction of the total revenues needed for park maintenance and improvements.

The average expenditure of the Yellowstone visitor can be estimated at \$20 per person. Many tourists spend more, but some "sage-brushers" (as campers are called in the park) purchase all their supplies outside and use free camp grounds. Once within the gates these independent folk close up like clams, economically speaking—a not unnatural reaction to park prices, which are high. If the estimate of \$20 per capita strikes an average, the 260,000 tourists who swarmed through during the 1934 season must have left behind some \$5,000,000. Total travel for 1935 was 317,998, an increase of twenty-two per cent over 1934.

Officials in Yellowstone are ready to agree that the operators have their problems—short season, tremendous depreciation and high freight rates. But these problems fade before close analysis. The season depends on the weather, averaging about three months, although a few stores and cabin camps may remain open four months or longer. At any rate, the season is no shorter than in outside resort centers. Property depreciation is considerable, although most of the larger buildings are constructed of huge durable timbers and other natural unfinished materials. While the park is isolated from centers of population and production, the north entrance is connected by rail with the main line of the Northern Pacific, fifty miles away; a branch line of the Union Pacific extends from Pocatello, Idaho, to the west entrance; and from West Yellowstone by paved highway the irrigated section of central Idaho is only 125 miles distant.

As tourists by the thousands converge on Yellowstone from all points of the compass, they run the gauntlet of stores, lodges

and hotels in a manner analogous to sheep passing through a shearing pen. In Yellowstone if one needs transportation, food, clothing or shelter, he pays a price not set by fair competition, or does without. Yet the wages tendered Yellowstone employees are surprisingly low for federal as well as private payrolls. I have before me an interesting document—the 1935 employment circular of the Yellowstone Park Lodge and Camps Company. Under "positions in main lodges," it lists thirty-eight types of employment, ranging from "accountants—wage, \$45 per month; bonus, \$15 per month," to "vegetable men—wage, \$30 per month; bonus, \$10 per month." It is enlightening to learn that the current rate for able-bodied pot washers is \$30 per month, plus a \$10 bonus. Porters and waitresses, who depend largely on tips, receive \$15 monthly plus \$10 bonus, but "laundry maids—wage \$20 per month; bonus, \$10 per month" must be facing a dreary future. Some thirteen different types of jobs are available in cafeterias. Salad women and checkers and cashiers punch out \$35, plus \$10, with floor girls and vegetable women trailing at \$20 plus \$10. In the housekeeping camps, where the wage scale is slightly lower, cashiers receive \$30 plus \$10, scrubbers (men) muscle in at \$30 plus \$10, and cabin cleaners and maids manage to pick up \$15 plus \$10. However, the demand for jobs being steady, the operator secures at his own price an abundance of help. The bonus is paid only at the end of the season to workers who have completed their contracts. According to the employment circular, "the lot of contract breakers is an unhappy state. They lose their bonus and their automobile transportation back to the railroad." On the other hand, the company reserves in contracts the right to transfer or to change the status of any employee, and

"in the event of an excess of employees owing to decreased travel, or other circumstances beyond the control of employer, to terminate the period of employment." Reading further in the circular, one meets the frank statement: "The work is hard. Just how hard depends on the mental and physical make-up of the employee. The acceptable type is the person with a sturdy, healthy body, and a disposition to be happy at work."

"On the other hand," the circular continues, "there is a bright side to the picture" in the form of "high altitude"—"life in the open"—"renewal of physical vigor"—and "stimulating association with healthy, ambitious and intelligent young people from every corner of the United States." Apparently, there is an intangible "something in the atmosphere of Yellowstone and the camp life that makes hard work seem far less arduous than the same work elsewhere."

The hotels and lodges depend in considerable degree on dudes—the tourists who reach the park by rail and use the yellow buses during their stay. In the early years of the depression such travel decreased alarmingly and the hotels were hard hit. More recently, however, the railroads have offered attractive rates and rail travel for the 1935 season showed an increase of 28.3 per cent over 1934. Hotel rates range from \$2.75 for one person, not including meals and bath, to \$10 a day for room with bath and meals for one person. Lodges, constituting the next step downward in the park caste system, maintain dining rooms and cafeterias, but the guests sleep in separate cabins, the furnishings including the old-fashioned wash bowl and pitcher with related accessories. These cabins are provided with stoves, fuel, and electric lights. The lodge rate for meals and cabin is \$4.50 per day for each guest.

The housekeeping cabins in the auto camps are almost as crude as packing cases. Constructed of pine boards and in some cases provided only with canvas tops, these wilderness domiciles are no more luxurious than the hogan of the Navaho. Usually there is a rusty stove and floors stained with the grease of countless fish fries. The rates for these cabins range from \$1 a night for one person to \$2.50 for four adults, bedding and fuel not included. The company kindly rents blankets at twenty-five cents each per night.

In Yellowstone a fire in the evening is not only cheerful but is needed for personal comfort. Yet first you must procure wood—a fuel so plentiful that the park power plants burn huge quantities of it. Thousands of trees have been felled in recent attempts to check the inroads of bark beetles, and in clearings for highway construction. But in spite of the abundance of wood, it becomes extraordinarily rare when you need it. The sage-brusher may gather wood free in the forest, but the main camping areas are picked clean. However, there is wood for sale in Yellowstone Park—of all places! For twenty-five cents one may purchase almost an armful of split pieces. Formerly the bundles were but twelve inches in diameter; now they have been enlarged to sixteen inches.

Contrary to belief, the yellow buses in the park are not gold-plated, although an analysis of rates might so indicate. If one enters the park at West Yellowstone, the charge for the trip around the main loop is \$25 for the 170-mile journey—almost fifteen cents per mile. A similar but shorter tour, starting at Gardiner and returning, would cost almost seventeen cents a mile. If the bus passenger desires to experience real mountain driving, the company obligingly will route any bus over a short detour leading to the top of Mt. Wash-

burn—for an extra \$2 a head. There is also a side trip to the north end of the magnificent Teton country—about 100 miles in all—for an extra \$12.50.

Yellowstone general stores bear a striking resemblance to the metropolitan drug store, supplying every need from beefsteak and beer to fishing tackle and mittens. Of souvenirs there is an overwhelming abundance, although with the exception of bear skins, hardly one of the trinkets is characteristic of the northern Rocky Mountain section. Most of this stuff travels thousands of miles in its journey to Yellowstone. A local prospectus describing the wonders of the contiguous Jackson Hole country naively states that in season, bear hunting is good, especially near the park boundaries!

Food prices in the stores range from moderate to exorbitant. Articles with the price printed on the wrapper are sold at the stipulated figure. I do not recall the price of bananas at Old Faithful, where I was stationed in 1934, but I do remember it seemed so ridiculous that I did not indulge in the fruit. Flour was twice as high, and ground beef and fresh tomatoes, even when the latter were in season, were approximately three times as costly at Old Faithful as in Pocatello or Salt Lake City. Married federal employees living in Yellowstone Park purchase many of their commodities outside, usually at Livingston, Montana, the nearest large town.

The speed with which many visitors glimpse the park reminds one of the auto races at Indianapolis. A tourist will drive up to the information office at Old Faithful and, without taking the trouble to disembark, will yell: "When will she squirt?" If the eruption is expected within the next few minutes the tourist condescends to wait. However, before the awe-inspiring four-minute eruption is completed, John Tourist may be zooming down the road towards West Thumb, his gait hastened by his anxiety to escape this area of high prices, some of which he has already encountered.

At present the sage-brush method is the best way to see Yellowstone Park, as ever-increasing multitudes are learning. The experienced sage-brusher buys his staple groceries and equipment in the larger towns outside the park. Once within the boundary he sets up his home under his own private pine tree in one of the free tourist camps. His box of provisions he suspends from a bough beyond the grasp of ever-hungry bears. Wise and leisurely, he learns that Yellowstone holds wonders and treasures unknown to the three-and-one-half-day dude. He also learns that the way to appreciate them is not to pay park prices. The sage-brusher, one suspects, holds the firm opinion that the *people* referred to in the first Yellowstone Park Act were the American people, not a small group of concession operators.



THE LIBRARY

The Background of Crime

BY FLETCHER PRATT

MONEY FROM HOME, by Damon Runyon. \$2.00. 5½ x 7¾; 313 pp. New York: *Stokes*.

CRIME INCORPORATED, by Martin Mooney. \$2.50. 5½ x 8; 280 pp. New York: *Whittlesey House*.

SCIENCE VERSUS CRIME, by Henry Morton Robinson. \$2.50. 5¾ x 8½; 303 pp. Indianapolis: *Bobbs-Merrill*.

MORE STUDIES IN MURDER, by Edmund Pearson. \$2.50. 5½ x 8½; 315 pp. New York: *Smith & Haas*.

ROOTS OF CRIME, by Dr. Franz Alexander and Dr. William Healy. \$3.00. 5½ x 8¾; 305 pp. New York: *Knopf*.

THESE five crime books fall readily into a chromatic scale from the pinkish hilarity of the first to the purple velvet gloom of the last. Only two of them (the Pearson and Robinson *opera*) are well enough written to be read for their literary merits; only two (Robinson again and *Roots of Crime*) make any effort toward serious treatment; and only one, the last, reports an attempt to deal with the roots of that problem of crime which is so highly absorbing to the American public that detective stories form the largest single class of books now being printed.

It is perhaps significant that the one serious effort to deal with the question should be the record of an almost total failure, ending in a plea of insufficient data and experience. The scientists, in other words, are not at all sure either of the cause or the cure of the American permanent crime

wave. Mr. Robinson, who writes like an angel except when he is discussing general ideas, and Mr. Mooney, who writes like Bernarr MacFadden all the time, feel themselves on surer ground. They are quite certain that the roots of crime lie in "general social maladjustment"—one of those vague New Deal phrases by which anything from boondoggling to blowing off the top of your neighbor's head may be justified. "Under present conditions crime will never be eradicated," says Mr. Robinson. "Nor is it likely to decrease until those who engage in it, those who profit by it, those who *tolerate* it, are swept aside by an informed and powerful social philosophy which declares that no citizen . . . shall henceforth be condemned to a life of criminality by flaws of physical heritage, mental deficiency, social inequality or economic pressure."

Now we submit that this is counsel of despair, with an elfin echo of "Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains." It is unrealistic, as hopelessness always is, for it does not seem to have occurred to either the melancholy Mr. Robinson or the gloomy Mr. Mooney that the "social maladjustment" they complain about is, in fact, the very spirit of America. Essentially, there is not much difference between the boy who leaves home to join a gang and the men who left home to colonize a continent. Both forsake intolerable local conditions in the hope of

gaining large rewards among circumstances dangerous and trying indeed, but beyond the reach of petty regulations designed to make humans move through life with the rhythmical monotony of clocks. The American frontier, as every visitor from Basil Hall down has noted, has always been the abode of "bad men". We are hardly a generation from it, and the closing of the frontiers has simply driven the bad men into the cities.

The interesting point concerns the permanence of this frontier psychology, this spirit of discontent, adventure, and lawlessness. Certainly it now underlies the whole of American society; the population is made up of elements on which a process of evolutionary selection has operated to accentuate these characteristics. For three centuries Europe has been discharging its turbulent oddities into this continent to join others of their kind, and keeping its contented cows at home. If Mr. Mooney were familiar with the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle or the sagas, as he apparently is not, he would know that Norway and England a thousand years ago were vexed with crime and an alliance between racketeers and politicians very little different from that which he pictures as a new and horrible menace to America. All the characteristic stigmata were present then as now, even the excessive legalism which so frequently aids the guilty to escape in the cases described by Mr. Pearson. Indeed, this legislative enthusiasm for manufacturing a thousand new crimes in the effort to prevent one old one, is not the least curious of the botanical specimens nourished in the subsoil of American lawlessness. Mr. Mooney (a great hand at alliteration) mentions "sixteen sinister rackets". Six of them are not crimes in any country but the United States. One other (compulsory unionization of labor) is practiced by the

governments of several countries with the approval of the population; one more (monopolistic control of certain food products) is practiced by all governments at times, and still another (gambling) is publicly encouraged in many other New Utopias. The average citizen cannot keep from breaking the law in some way every day, and if he be of a sardonic spirit, he can hardly miss the fact that it is very little worse for him to break all the laws. In short, the American does not have the European's respect for the rules of society to start with, and even if he did have it, American society has so many rules he cannot possibly keep them all.

This is curiously reflected in the two books from the opposite poles of the spectrum. Drs. Alexander and Healy sought to arouse in the subjects they treated by psychoanalysis, not a sense of social responsibility but one of individual responsibility — an interesting plan but one not likely to be carried much further until psychology becomes a more exact science.

Mr. Runyon's racetrack touts, petty crooks, and dames have a code of conduct, and a guy is a "wrong gee" if he violates it, yet all of them accept the effraction of the official statutes as a matter of course. Although the characters in *Money From Home* are romanticized out of all resemblance to human beings, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Mr. Runyon's portrait of their attitude toward the law. After all, as the public relations counsel for Broadway, he is in a position to speak authoritatively for this code. Very prominent among its principles are those forbidding all commerce with "squealers", permitting a man to take justice into his own hands in cases of "outraged honor", and the idea that woman is a frail vessel no more to be held responsible for her acts than a child. None of these codes is recog-

nized in law, yet as Mr. Pearson's cases prove, all are established in fact, not in New York alone but throughout the country.

Mr. Pearson traces the beginnings of the curious code of "honor-slaying" to the days of the Hearst-Pulitzer yellow journalism war, when the sob sisters of the *Journal* and the *World* got Maria Barberi a re-trial and acquittal in an honor murder of which she had already been convicted and which she did not deny ("Everything went black!"); and the murder of Albert Richardson by Dan McFarland. I think he is in error; more than half a century before the Richardson-McFarland case, Andrew Jackson was relieved of pains and penalties after killing a man for similar cause, and General Sickles had filled his wife's paramour with lead slugs amid universal approval long before McFarland had heard of Richardson.

One detects an accent of indignation in Mr. Pearson's accounts of such acquittals, apparently due to the fact that they fly in the face of the law. But his annoyance is both useless and unphilosophical; for he fails to recognize that all law has come into being by crystallizing around a core of custom. The really curious thing about this code is that with adaptations to adult conditions, it is precisely the code of schoolboys the world over. Mr. Robinson, indeed, recognizes this fact. He finds the roots of crime in the American competitive system — "For we cherish a peculiar illusion, we Americans, the illusion that we all have a right to be rich, beautiful, well-married. . . . Psychically, this illusion is so green, so childish, that other nations laugh at us for our naïveté. A French farmer knows he will always be poor and a German shopkeeper realizes that his tiny *Geschäft* will never yield him more than a mere livelihood. Yet we Americans scorn these miserable destinies."

And the inherent youthfulness of the American attitude toward crime comes out in all the first four books in this little collection. In *Money From Home*, coincidence drops fortune out of the skies into the lap of every deserving citizen and finds a glass slipper for every Cinderella; *Crime, Incorporated* is all about the dreadful boogeymans, *märchen* of a more romantic world; *More Studies in Murder* urbanely conducts its readers through a tide of blood that is no more vital than the theoretical gore spilled in a schoolboys' war game; *Science Versus Crime* tells us about magicians who conjure genii out of bottles to defeat the demons of darkness. Yes, it is all very jejune, childish, and unsophisticated. It may be possible for America to find laws that will permit everyone reasonable activity, but if we ever get to the millennial stage where none of us has any sense of "general social maladjustment", it will be time for the Japs to step in and take us over along with the other coolies.



Chesterton's Three-Card Trick

BY ERNEST BOYD

THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS, by G. K. Chesterton. \$2.50. 5½ x 8; 277 pp. New York: *Sheed and Ward*.

FOR thirty years I have been watching the gyrations of Mr. Chesterton's controversial pen. I was a precocious reader of his when he professed to be a Liberal and, though an ardent advocate of beer, beer, glorious beer, wrote for what was then known as the "Cocoa Press", because the Cadbury owners did not permit advertisements of alcoholic beverages. When Messrs. Shaw, Wells, Belloc, and Chesterton debated publicly at least once a week, and

that monster of literary vaudeville, the "Chesterbelloc", was christened by Mr. Shaw, I witnessed the gradual evolution of Mr. Chesterton from Liberalism to Roman Catholicism and a weird utopia of Merrie England, filled with pious, beer-drinking peasants, all craftsmen or tillers of the soil, and all snugly ensconced in their pre-Reformation faith. At all times I was impressed by his manifest inferiority, as a controversialist, to the other writers of the group, and to this day I cannot understand how his mere thimble-rigging of ideas could be compared to the witty and thought-provoking paradoxes of Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw, it is true, had a doctrine to preach, whereas Mr. Chesterton had nothing to offer, for a long time, but puns, verbal or mental, chiefly the former. In 1908, however, when *Orthodoxy* came as a positive pronouncement of his creed, he, too, had found religion, and after the lapse of some years he was formally received into the Roman Catholic Church. Whatever private satisfactions this conversion may have brought him, the seriousness of his purpose did not in any way change or improve his style. Unlike Mr. Shaw, he could not combine wit and paradox with the gravity of his mission. He remained the incorrigible three-card trickster, uttering his spiel of machine-made quips and epigrams. Just to show that his method could be adapted to the rehabilitation of any system of belief, he actually wrote an essay in *Orthodoxy* proving from fairy-tales that miracles are possible.

The Well and the Shallows is clearly intended to take its place beside that earlier work, for it purports to be a serious exposition of Mr. Chesterton's orthodox opinions on current controversial questions. Roman Catholic editors and publishers are always pathetically eager to welcome any reputedly intellectual figure who

professes to have found a haven in the bosom of Holy Mother Church. My own feeling is that they ought to beware of their newly-found friends, for they usually represent the nadir of that excruciating art known as Christian apologetics, and G. K. Chesterton is certainly no exception. As the basis of all such arguments is essentially a begging of the question, the assumption that what has to be proved is already true, without proof, all that one can do is to judge the quality and method of argument as evidence of the author's good faith — whatever his Faith may be.

Both the tacit and the declared thesis is that the dogmas of Roman Catholic orthodoxy are the quintessence of sweetness, reasonableness, and light, and that modern science and modern thought, Protestantism and agnosticism, industrialism and parliamentary democracy, are the negation of civilization and the sole source of all social evils and inequalities. In brief, that the thirteenth century was the best. Hence, we find Mr. Chesterton arguing that Nazism is the inevitable result of Protestantism. "The hollow places that were once filled with the foaming fanaticism of the first Reformation doctrines are now filled with a foaming fanaticism of a totally different kind." Yet, the Nazi movement is led by an Austrian Catholic, despite Mr. Chesterton's assurances that Catholic Austria was the bulwark of true German Christianity against the Mohammedans and the Teutonic barbarians of the North. Strange, is it not, that the "void" created by the Reformation elsewhere has given us the entire phalanx of anti-Nazi, Protestant, democratic countries? But this is falling back on "the jolly old catchword of calling Hitler a Catholic".

Because Bernard Shaw has read the Bible and drawn from it other conclusions than those of Mr. Chesterton, the latter

hastens to deprecate what he calls the "fun and futility" of "sectarian" Scripture-reading. He realizes, in other words, that it is dangerous for intelligent people to study the documents upon which the entire Christian religion is based. For instance, an advantage of ignoring the Bible is that one can then prove that divorce and birth-control are contrary to the teachings of God. There is, of course, not the faintest evidence that such is the case. In the Old Testament, divorce is explicitly sanctioned. There is no commandment against it, nor against birth-control—surely a curious failure on Jehovah's part to buttress up two of the most fanatical dogmas of the Catholic Church? As birth-control, in particular, is a subject upon which that Church presumes to dictate to non-Catholics, we are entitled to ask what Scriptural authority there is for such an attitude. The answer is: none whatsoever.

The only reference to the matter is the well-known passage in which Onan incurred the Lord's displeasure because he refused to have children by his brother's wife. His motive was specifically indicated, and the entire incident is one of hundreds of similar occasions when the Children of Israel were punished for minor and frequently ridiculous offenses, none of which has been taken over as precedent for the guidance of Christians. Otherwise, why have the *kosher* dietary laws been ignored? By analogy with the case of Onan, Mr. Chesterton should be opposed to census-taking, because the Lord punished Joab for so doing by killing seventy thousand men. In contrast to this isolated punishment of Onan, and the innumerable other references to like manifestations of the Lord's wrath, are all the very precise and reiterated commands which are quietly disregarded. The Lord, if we may judge by His own Holy Word, was much more con-

cerned about circumcision than about Onanism and He most emphatically denounced the lighting of fires in households on the Sabbath. His concern for every detail of hygiene, as understood at the time, would suggest that the practice of contraception would have inspired more than an anecdote, if He had deemed it a matter of paramount importance.

Mr. Chesterton adds nothing to the familiar Catholic diatribes on all aspects of the sexual question, save the wholly gratuitous assumption that, because divorce is possible, people now marry with the *intention* of getting divorced. By a like process of non-reasoning he protests against the revision of the Anglican prayer-book, on the ground that Parliament acted as if it "owned the Church of England", and that many of the members were atheists. Why a state-owned church should not be controlled by the people who support it, and discussed by the representatives of the nation to which it belongs, I fail to see. Here, too, the typical distrust of the Bible again becomes visible in the preposterous claim that the Book of Common Prayer is the "masterpiece of Protestantism", because "it was written by apostate Catholics. . . . It is strong, not in so far as it is the first Protestant book, but in so far as it was the last Catholic book." Protestantism is too vulgar to produce great stylists, readers of English literature will be pleased to hear, so Chesterton proves that style is exclusively the possession of "men who had been Catholics for fourteen-hundred years", as contrasted with "men who have been Protestants for four-hundred years". This obviously accounts for the superiority of the Catholic Douay Bible over the King James Version. I wonder why more than fourteen hundred years of Catholicism failed to give style to the Bible in French, Italian, and Spanish, and why the "foaming fan-

aticism" of the Reformation gave us the German Bible, the only one at all comparable to our own, from a literary point of view?

The Early Victorian notion of the "dogma of science" is trotted out and triumphantly refuted by reference to "the unanswered challenge of Lourdes", and to the mystical maunderings of the new physicists. Mr. Chesterton will never grasp, apparently, the real significance of that other Early Victorian and still sound concept: agnosticism. He believes that we are all panting to believe in something that has not been proved. So he asks us to believe that "the Church is always in advance of the world", because St. Thomas was an internationalist and St. Joan a nationalist before their time, and the blessed Roberto Bellarmine said "all there is to be said for democracy". Well, it is surely most unfortunate that the Church was so far behind the time of St. Joan that it burned her, and that the Ptolemaic system was so far in advance of the world that the Church punished Galileo for demonstrating the now accepted Copernican astronomy. But then, Mr. Chesterton does not hesitate to say that the Spanish Inquisition was "started strictly by the State", a piece of thimble-rigging which will presumably convince us that the Church had little or nothing to do with it.

Moreover, in spite of the fact that the only Protestant country in the world where tyranny flourishes today is Germany, Mr. Chesterton argues that Italy enjoys popular freedom, and that it is in the Protestant countries that traditions of freedom are being "ruthlessly and rapidly torn up and uprooted". In order to see through this three-card trick of debate it is necessary to realize that "Protestant tyranny is totally different from Catholic tyranny; let alone Catholic liberty". One might reply

that all tyrannies are equally objectionable, or that the Protestant variety has manifestly weighed more lightly on the modern world. Mr. Chesterton, however, is not interested in history. The Church being in possession of the Absolute Truth, it can do no wrong. Non-Catholics, not being equipped with this privilege, can never be right when they differ from Catholics. Which brings us back to the *petitio principii*, which renders futile all discussion with G. K. Chesterton.



The Wordsworths

By LLEWELYN POWYS

THE EARLY LETTERS OF WILLIAM AND DOROTHY WORDSWORTH, 1787-1805, arranged and edited by Ernest de Selincourt. \$8.75. 6¼ x 9; 578 pp. New York: Oxford University Press.

MR. DE SELINCOURT is performing an invaluable service in editing the letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth. It is true that the result of his industry is never likely to make popular reading, yet for persons possessing a serious interest in the literary history of England these comprehensive collections will always be highly valued.

The volume under consideration contains the correspondence of the brother and sister during the early and more interesting years of their lives, and it offers an opportunity for a course of quiet reading that will be found restorative to those who desire a retreat from the insistent pressure of present-day life. It is in truth a homely enough record of the day-by-day existence of the poet and his gifted sister, and yet as the effect of the letters accumulates we find ourselves becoming more and more

involved in the modest dramas of the unmenaced Dove Cottage existence. They were an odd pair, the young man with slowly-moving animal emotions and slowly-moving animal thoughts capable of being roused under particular circumstances to passionate reciprocities or to truly sublime poetic inspirations; the sensitive girl more aware than her brother of the surrounding scenes, with a quicker attention and more variable mental complexion, and spiritually far less heavily self-absorbed. They used to say that Wordsworth's head resembled that of a horse, and surely Dorothy might be likened to a wild-eyed filly following at the unshod heavy hoofs of an "old mountain rover", which, ranging free—now walking, now grazing, now walking, now grazing—was as indifferent to rain as to sunshine, in all weathers patient and enduring. There is no doubt that inspiration was often far from Wordsworth. For weeks together he would remain in a state of "stupid being", in a state of blank and obdurate passivity, like a wayside stock which confronts a turnpike with the same unilluminated, weather-worn, unchanging visage. Many of the letters reveal a ponderous quality, if nothing worse, so that one is dismayed to find oneself recalling De Quincey's malicious recollections of walking by the side of Dorothy (a little way behind the poet who was discussing business with a friend), and of hearing her exclaim as she observed the concentrated slope of Wordsworth's shoulders: "Is it possible? Can that be William? How very mean he looks!"

A dash of the attorney blood of their father seems to have run in the veins of all the family. Even Dorothy can be sharp with her brother Richard on the subject of her patrimony, and it is to be recalled how the family plan to conceal the

episode of William's love affair in France was crowned with success for a whole century, so that the name of Annette Vallon was all but forgotten, together with their little natural daughter Caroline, the subject of Wordsworth's sonnet which contains the beautiful lines:

Dear Child! Dear Girl! that walkst with
me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn
thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine.

That the poet did have something a trifle unworthy in his composition appears clear enough after reading a letter addressed to his wealthy benefactor, Sir George Beaumont, a few days subsequent to the tragic death of Captain John Wordsworth, Wordsworth's younger brother, drowned in the wreck of the *Abergavenny* off Weymouth in 1805:

My dear and honoured friend, one pang I had, one vain wish, one bitter regret, it was this, that in the hour of his agony he might have had communicated to him for one poor moment your goodness to his Brother.

And yet in spite of such lapses he remains always a figure that commands respect. Mr. H. R. King, who was for many years a schoolmaster at Sherborne and died a few months ago at the age of eighty, told me that as a young man he used to ask the dalesmen for their memories of the poet and recollected one of them saying, "I mind the ould man well. Many is the time I have heard him a'humming to himself out on the fells." It was of course Wordsworth's habit to compose his poetry as he walked abroad on those celebrated spindle legs of his, about which De Quincey makes such unmannerly sport, calculating that they had carried him at least two-hundred thousand miles for all their ill looks.

Certain modern readers may agree with Miss Babette Deutsch in finding the Wordsworths' letters stodgy and full of more information about the activity of their bowels than about that of their minds, but there will be others both more and less sophisticated who will derive comfort from an initiation into the passage of such harmless uneventful days, days redeemed by happenings such as the following, which, though lightly referred to, appears now to contain "intimations of Immortality" indeed! "I left William sitting upon a stone near the foot of Brothers Water and walked up the lake. When I returned I found him writing the poem which I send you"—the poem in question being the one which begins:

The cock is crowing
The stream is flowing
The small birds twitter
The lake doth glitter
The green field sleeps in the sun.

A poem as thrilling to the ears of after generations as is a blackbird's April whistling from a pear-tree branch. These early letters teach us to forget all those later years of the great poet's life, years which were studiously employed in the deliverance of endless verses which were to provoke Oscar Wilde to remark: "Wordsworth found sermons under the stones, but he had put them there himself."

There is a delightful intimacy about many of the letters. How charming, for instance, is the excitement of Derwent, Coleridge's second little boy, when the Wordsworths were seen from a distance approaching the Keswick house, baby John and all. "Derwent was half mad with pleasure. They said he ran up and down the room shouting 'Mary's coming, Dorothy's coming, get the green stool for Johnny!'" There is scarce a letter that does not open a door for us into a solid

Cockermouth fairyland made up of hazelnut copses, primrose orchards, and of the sounds of rainbow-falling waterfalls. Cockermouth, where Wordsworth was born, is a land of long sunshine-mornings, of long indolent afternoons, of clouds and winds and small spring rains and of lovely interminable twilights—the dwelling place of a simple folk content with the most harmless pleasures ever conceived: "We have our haircutter below stairs, William is reading the leach-gatherer to him"; and again in another of Dorothy's letters, "You who have nursed your own babe by a cottage fireside know what peace and pleasure, wakefulness and hope there is in attending upon a healthy infant . . . his eyes are not fine ones, they are small, but that you know makes him more like his Father, and they have frequently the very same expression as his Father's—that same mild light when he smiles"; and again to her same sympathetic correspondent, Mrs. Clarkson, "Oh! my dear friend, what a beautiful spot this is! The greenest in all the earth, the softest green covers the mountains even to the very top. I am writing in my own room. Every now and then I hear the chirping of a little family of swallows that have their abode against the glass of my windows." The very disappointments and frustrations of this exceptional girl's life seem to add an air of reality to the primitive idyllic scene; and although in her old age, when her understanding became pathetically overcast and Wordsworth tended her with an ungrudging devotion, we have every reason for suspecting that in these earlier times he would not have concerned himself to lighten her indoor duties, which, after all, must have been so much more irksome to the poetic Dorothy than to Wordsworth's wife, "domestic as a plate", of whom De Quincey reports that the words

"God bless you" represented her conversational gifts. "Dorothy," Wordsworth writes to Coleridge, "is now sitting by me racked with toothache. This is a grievous misfortune as she has so much work for her needle among the bed curtains"; and she herself in a letter to Jane Marshall writes: "I was left at home to make pies and dumplings, and was to follow them when I had finished my business; but as they could not tell exactly which way they should go I sought them in vain."

And yet when one remembers the lot of the average young lady of the period, hers might appear favored. She would certainly have had small scope for moments of high imaginative intensity had she remained in the establishment of her conventional uncle, Canon Cookson of Windsor, and after all, to have been present at the actual birth of the Romantic Revival in English poetry was a most singular privilege. "We have been on another tour: We set out last Monday evening at half past four. The evening was dark and cloudy. We went eight miles, William and Coleridge employing themselves in laying the plan of a ballad, to be published with some pieces of William's." When, however, she writes to Coleridge or of Coleridge, a heightened feeling becomes apparent which leads one to suspect that the old hearsay which suggested that the heart of this rare creature was held in the keeping of her brother's extraordinary friend was not altogether unreliable. "Farewell! God love you! God bless you! Dear Coleridge, our very dear friend."

De Quincey, mischievous as a drawing-room sprite, does not hesitate "to pass remarks" upon the singular material good fortune that accompanied the poet through his long life, so that what with legacies and sinecures his income never fell behind the increases of his expenditure, "still

keeping pace in almost arithmetical ratio with his wants". For such dispensations of Providence he is most surely to be envied, but even more perhaps for the spacious undisturbed days of innocent tranquillity when in his goings-in and comings-out he remained hour after hour, year after year, untroubled in his mind and untroubled in his body, days the quality of which may well be suggested by such an innocent extract as the following: "I am going to spend the afternoon with my sister and the children in the orchard. It is as warm as summer."



Our Vanishing Vulgarity

BY MEADE MINNIGERODE

A VISIT TO AMERICA, by A. G. Macdonell. \$2.50. 5½ x 8¼; 274 pp. New York: Macmillan.

AMERICA, A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK, by Ronald Elwy Mitchell. Five shillings. 7½ x 5¼; 318 pp. London: Hamish Hamilton.

A. G. MACDONELL was much troubled with parties. "Only in a Pullman car is the European traveler safe from parties." In New York, in the first four days, sixteen cocktail parties, four dinner parties, four supper parties, and four dances. He survived sufficiently, however, to discover that in New York only the poor use the subway, and that it is impossible to find any trains in the Grand Central Station. He also visited the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Harlem. In addition, and continually pestered with parties, Macdonell visited Baltimore, Chicago, and Omaha; Billings, Helena, and Butte; Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Monterey, and Los Angeles; Fort Worth, Dallas, Louisville,

Boston, and Paterson, New Jersey. So he has written a book on America.

R. E. Mitchell spent three years in America; under the auspices of the Commonwealth Fund, he studied at an American university; he traveled thousands of miles all over the country in every direction; he was not overwhelmed with cock-tails or unduly bothered with parties; and he, too, has written a book, a "superficial" book he modestly calls it. A very different sort of book.

Now Macdonell, after all his mileage, has "never solved this problem" — he calls it "one of the major insoluble problems of American life" — and the problem is this: "Why is it that so many American gentlemen, often of the most distinguished appearance and of otherwise faultless manners, find it necessary to expectorate in public so often, whereas American ladies so very seldom do?" In fact, the author "cannot recall a single instance of seeing an American lady perform this inelegant feat, whereas American gentlemen are at it, in club cars at any rate, frequently".

Well, it *is* a problem. One of those curious problems of American life. It all goes back to 1840 — the quotations from now on are all from contemporary American sources — when Home was "the palace of the husband and the father", in which he was "the monarch of that little empire, wearing a crown that is the gift of Heaven, swaying a scepter put into his hands by the Father of all, acknowledging no superior, fearing no rival, and dreading no usurper". Expectorating at will, and unchallenged, into his large spittoons. The American lady never had a chance. To men belonged the professions and offices, to them, "by right of courtesy, all the activities and authorities of life". Indeed, the only activity open to woman, "the only accredited seat for a woman's intellect", was authorship.

Actually, Macdonell has come among us a little late. Expectorating is not, really, what it used to be in America. The old proficiency, among our gentlemen at least, is not there. The propulsion of the quid, across the sanded floor, into the bull's-eye of the brass spittoon, in a swiftly accurate arc — that art is dying out. There is now hardly an American gentleman who could hit a fifty-cent piece at five paces. Already our vulgarity has lost much of its fine, aggressive individuality. Today it sits, a pale shadow of itself, in club cars, distinguished and faultlessly mannered, unable to do anything more than expectorate — and not too brilliantly either; without any particular verve or technique, without coloratura and without pride.

But Macdonell's problem is not insoluble. They already knew the answer to it in 1840. "The secret of all this vulgarity in society is that wealth, or the reputation of wealth, constitutes the open sesame to its delectable precincts." There it is — money, money, money. Only the poor use the subway, where they are not permitted to expectorate. At the present rate at which wealth is evaporating, it will not be long before all our gentlemen are using the subway — no more club cars, no more spittoons — and then expectorating itself will finally cease in America.

And not only that, but our capacity for giving parties is steadily diminishing. These visiting authors who have to lock themselves up in their return cabins to recuperate from the effects of our terrific hospitality simply cannot take it. Our terrific hospitality today is a puny degeneration from the robust conviviality and gastronomic give and take of the previous century; our attention to visitors only a feeble twittering compared to the sweating, corn-trampling, vociferating stampede of our earlier curiosity, our former excita-

tion. Of course, the number of visiting authors has vastly increased, and not every goose quill can be a swan's feather. But the fact remains that we have lost much of our social vigor, along with our decreasing vulgarity. We no longer have so much stuff on the meat ball.

Parties forsooth! Macdonell was subjected to innumerable cocktails and highballs, but at that no one filled him full of sangarees and timberdoodles. He saw Harlem, but he never saw the Model Artists show in which men and women were exhibited in *tableaux vivants* "in almost the same state in which Gabriel saw them in the Garden of Eden on the first morning of creation"—those "nice *tableaux vivants* of beautiful young ladies *sans* both petticoats and pants, who scorning fashion's shifts and whims did nightly crowds delight by showing up their handsome limbs at fifty cents a sight". Macdonell had to foot it through numberless dances, but he never staggered home with cramps in his calves after an evening spent dancing the violent polka—that "gross, vulgar and obscene exhibition"—in a ballroom reflecting the glitter of two thousand candles, with young ladies wearing tight corsages trimmed with feathers, and roses and birds of paradise in their hair; or else the hair in bandeaux, a little frizzed, the back coiled up in thick rouleaux like cables, with two branches of the pink acacia drooping at each side of the face. Freely sprinkled with frangipani or patchouli, catechu, ambergris, musk or spermaceti. Himself anointed with bear's grease, bull's marrow, or Balm of Columbia, perfumed perhaps with Double Extract of Queen Victoria.

Macdonell partook of many suppers, but he never had to take Spolen's Elixir of Health for having been forced to indulge too freely in an eleven o'clock supper of

stewed oysters, boned turkey with celery and cranberries, ice cream and sugar plums, accompanied by hock, sherry, Madeira, champagne, and brandy. Perhaps Macdonell attended some banquets, but was his digestive prowess ever challenged, all at one sitting, to the tune of two soups, two fish, five *relevés* including turkey and calf's head, some cold set pieces, nineteen *entrées* and then—roast beef, roast lamb, roast duck, roast turkey, roast chicken, and roast goose, followed by guinea hens, quails, and partridges with seven vegetables, leading up to twelve desserts?

And no doubt Macdonell was lionized. But was he ever, in the midst of three hours of speechmaking, a "pilgrim of genius from other lands, bringing costly gems to enrich the foreign shrine, and gathering wild flowers to adorn the domestic altar"? In your hat! And was he ever—to the sound of an enormous gong—made to appear upon a platform under a dome of bunting and gold tissue, greeted with gales of laughter, and then buffeted about through a concourse of three thousand persons who all fell in behind, whooping and cheering their heads off?

That was the hilarious America of a hundred years ago. Vim, vigor, vulgarity, and victuals. And very good fun, too. Now already we are falling from our previous low estate. It will not be long before America is made entirely safe for visiting authors. It is too bad.

But R. E. Mitchell's book shows what you can do if you come to a strange country armed with a lively and humorous curiosity, a certain share of common sense, an intelligent desire to see and observe, and a mind capable of recording impressions and not merely impressionisms. A series of such books, on the English, on the French, on any nationality you please, would make fascinating and instructive

reading. The book is, as it proclaims itself, a handbook, filled with every sort of practical information, much of it superfluous to an American reader. And yet there is a virtue in lists, in catalogues of places and names, in comparisons of terms and juxtapositions of methods, which makes even those portions of the book entertaining to a native. For it is always entertaining to read about yourself, to be reminded how you do a thousand and one things which you do without thinking, to discover that you do a thousand and one things which you had forgotten you did. This is America, fine, funny and foolish, from a thousand and one viewpoints; from boats, and trains, and flivvers; from Vermont hilltops and Florida beaches; from the Empire State Building and from Hollywood studios; from hotels, and tourist rest-houses, and roadside cabin camps; from open fields, and deserts, and waste places; from Charleston, and Duluth, and Sauk Center. What we do and how we do it; what we say and how we pronounce it; what we eat and how we cook it; what we think, what we sing, what we laugh at. And some very fine descriptions of our countryside. Aside from this, no wonders of Nature, and almost no cocktails. It is excellent reading.



Briefer Mention

FICTION

IF I HAVE FOUR APPLES.

By Josephine Lawrence.

\$2.50

5 3/4 x 8 1/2; 314 pp.

Stokes

New York

Here, at last, is the definitive novel on middle-class America. The dreary saga of the Hoes is the composite case-history of ten million American families who manage to scrape through life without in the least comprehending its values or responsibilities. Hemmed in by economic pres-

sure, they struggle for emancipation by means of scientific gadgets and instalment buying. But the laws of mathematics are exact laws, and the family which tries to make one dollar do the work of two is headed for disaster. In the final collapse, the structure of home, parents, and children lies buried beneath the debris of fallacious hopes and broken promises. *If I Have Four Apples* is a more important book than its predecessor, *Years Are So Long*; it is more ruthless and probing. If read by a sufficient number of people, it would do more towards bringing about a clear understanding of modern economic problems than a complete library of academic treatises.



FREEDOM, FAREWELL.

By Phyllis Bentley.

\$2.50

5 1/4 x 7 1/2; 496 pp.

Macmillan

New York

Here is a story of Caesar and the end of the Roman Republic, of the realist patriot who became dictator in order to purge his country of "the exasperating muddle of the Senate, the selfishness of the rich, the ignorance and misery of the poor", and left behind him a legacy of despotism. Miss Bentley adorns her tale with a remarkably vivid picture of the Roman world of Caesar's day. She builds on fact and allows her creative imagination full play in the interpretation of causes and characters. Caesar and Brutus, clever time-serving Cicero, Julia, the soldier Pompey, Portia, stern Cato, the Servilia whom Caesar loved, Rome and the Rubicon, Pharsala, Philippi, people and fateful places come into life and being in an absorbing, brilliantly written historical novel.



CAPTAIN CONAN.

By Roger Vercel.

\$2.50

5 1/2 x 8; 296 pp.

Holt and Company

New York

The portrait of a born soldier brought to dark stature by war, painted by a Frenchman who has utilized his own experiences in the Balkans during the late Armageddon to construct an unusually moving story. Captain Conan is a one-time draper of Brittany, who discovers in armed strife the outlet for bravery, as well as debauchery and insubordination. At the close of the war he leads his band of trench-raiders into Rumania, where they pose as heroes while pursuing the more profitable trade of bandits. Finally placed under arrest for the death of a hold-up victim,

the Captain wipes clean his shield by a valiant feat of arms. Then occurs his gradual retrogression to civilian life, where the collapse of his character and morale becomes complete. This is a story of tragedy and baseness, lighted here and there with glimpses of a human struggling against the destiny of the misfit. It is neither a defense nor a condemnation of war; rather it is a study of war's effects upon man's mind. As a novel of sound worth, it deserves the honor awarded it in France—the *Prix Goncourt* for 1934.



ILL MOURN YOU LATER.

By *Catherine Whitcomb*. *Houghton Mifflin*
\$2 6 x 8½; 257 pp. *Boston*

A first novel distinguished by unusual subtlety and delicacy of perception, with a style both light and certain. The story of a widow's return to her childhood home for her mother's funeral, and the foregathering of the St. John family, each one with a different, living claim upon her, frequently suggests, with its integrity, the artistry of Willa Cather.



PRECIOUS BANE.

By *Mary Webb*. *E. P. Dutton*
\$3 5½ x 8; 320 pp. *New York*

Awarded the Femina Vie Heureuse Prize for 1924-25 when it was originally published in England, and given American publication in 1926, *Precious Bane* is now brought out in a new edition—for the delight of an audience which will probably continue to be small but deeply appreciative. It is a wise and tender book.



A STONE CAME ROLLING.

By *Fielding Burke*. *Longmans, Green*
\$2.50 5¾ x 8¼; 412 pp. *New York*

This is another proletarian novel. That is to say, it deals with the squalor, greed, selfishness, intolerance, and personal uncleanness which have for long been recognized as the hallmark of the inferior human being. That is to say, the families under discussion are about as unattractive and unwholesome as any to be found in America. The principal character, in this case a woman, devotes her efforts and physical glamor to furthering class hatred. We are entertained by accounts of omnipotent capitalists with paunches, who grind anemic millworkers beneath the wheels of Rolls-Royces. At the con-

clusion of the book, the reader discovers that nothing has been proved, except that radical propaganda rarely deviates from its juvenile norm.

POETRY

THE ISLAND CALLED PHAROS.

By *Archibald Fleming*. *Liveright*
\$2 5 x 7½; 66 pp. *New York*

Archibald Fleming's first volume shows sensitivity in thought and phrase; his images are interesting; his expression is uneven. The chief defect of his work is its fashion; it is too patently a product of the moment's poetic styles. After the first few lines one foresees that the book will be the properly balanced mixture of clean epithet and vague feeling, of partial penetration and general obscurity. "Adonis" is another of the numerous progeny begotten by "The Waste Land", even to the appended and erudite Note. "Atlas" and "Haunted House" mingle the inflection of Ezra Pound with the suspended accent of Archibald MacLeish. It may be true that Fleming, as MacLeish says, has "the poetic idiom of the generation now in its twenties". Unfortunately, that idiom is not its own, and the better poets of the generation—James Agee, Muriel Rukeyser, Reuel Denney, among others—have already established a speech of their own.



ONCE WHEN ARCTURUS SHONE.

By *Mabel Posegate*. *Stephen Daye Press*
\$1.60 5¼ x 7¾; 95 pp. *Brattleboro, Vermont*

Mrs. Posegate writes in the tradition, but she writes well. Her lyrics, such as the title-poem, remind one of Sara Teasdale's early songs, but her sonnets show a more thoughtful impulse. At her best, her verse has spontaneity and grace.



KANSAS POETS and IOWA POETS.

Edited by the *House of Harrison*. *Henry Harrison*
\$2 each 5½ x 8½; 221 pp. *New York*

The industrious House of Harrison continues its progress through these States, gathering poets not so much with editorial acumen as with a vacuum-cleaner. Soon there will be no excuse but poverty or perversity to keep the least talented versifier from finding himself between cloth-covers. With the exception of three contributors, both volumes are beneath comment.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

DUNCAN AIKMAN (*The Middle West Rules America*) is a veteran Washington newspaperman and has been a frequent contributor to THE MERCURY in the past.

ERNEST BOYD (*Chesterton's Three-Card Trick*), one of America's leading critics and men of letters, has often contributed to these pages. Further reviews from Mr. Boyd will appear regularly in THE LIBRARY.

ASHMUN BROWN (*The Roosevelt Myth*) has been a newspaperman for forty-five years and a Washington correspondent for twenty-six.

CONSTANCE CASSADY (*Youth Faces the Sex Problem*), a native of Pittsburgh, now lives in Chicago. She is the wife of an artist, has three children, and is the author of *Even in Laughter*. (Bobbs-Merrill).

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RALPH ADAMS CRAM (*Invitation to Monarchy*), one of America's most eminent architects, is equally well-known as an essayist and literary critic. His autobiography, *My Life in Architecture* (Little, Brown), was published in January.

REUEL DENNEY (*The Birds*) was graduated from Dartmouth College in 1932. He has contributed verse to *Poetry* and other magazines.

FORD MADDOX FORD (*Galsworthy*) is the noted English novelist and essayist. He will continue to contribute literary portraits to these pages.

FRANCES FROST (*Verge*) makes her winter home at Folly Island, South Carolina. Her last novel, *Innocent Summer* (Farrar and Rinehart), appeared in January.

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FRANK R. KENT (*If the New Dealers Win*) is the able Washington correspondent and political commentator of the *Baltimore Sun*, in the columns of which he writes a daily article concerning national affairs.

ARTHUR G. LEISMAN (*I Am Glad I Am Deaf*) is the president of the Wisconsin State Association for the Deaf.

A. C. McINTOSH (*Who Owns Yellowstone Park?*) has served as a ranger and naturalist in the government service. Since 1923, he has headed the Biology Department of the South Dakota State School of Mines.

MEADE MINNIGERODE (*Our Vanishing Vulgarity*), novelist and biographer, lives in Essex, Connecticut. His most recent book is *The Son of Marie Antoinette* (Farrar and Rinehart).

ALBERT JAY NOCK (*Who Will Pay the Bill?*), one of the foremost writers on past and present problems of American government, is a regular contributor to these pages.



TED OLSON (*Not for the Sickle*) is the news editor of the Laramie, Wyoming, *Republican-Boomerang*, and the author of one volume of verse, *A Stranger and Afraid* (Yale University Press).



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FLETCHER PRATT (*The Background of Crime*) was born in Buffalo in 1897 and now lives in New York City. His recent books include *Ordeal By Fire*, *The Cunning Mulatto*, and *Hail, Caesar!* (Smith and Haas).



JUDITH RAVEL (*Solace for Lonely Hearts*) is a resident of New York City and a contributor to various newspapers and magazines.



HENRY MORTON ROBINSON (*Rats*) has taught at Columbia University and is a former

editor of *Contemporary Verse*. His latest book, *Science Versus Crime* (Bobbs-Merrill), is reviewed in this issue.



DAVID ALLAN ROSS (*The Professional Communist*), writer and journalist, has lived in New York City for the past ten years.



MAURICE SAMUEL (*Curly Commits Murder*) was born in Rumania in 1895 and came to America in 1914. He served in the A. E. F., and since the war has traveled extensively in Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor.



LAURENCE STALLINGS (*Bush Brigades and Blackamoors*) has recently returned from Ethiopia, where he served as war correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance and chief of photography for Fox Movietone News. Mr. Stallings will resume his literary reviews for THE LIBRARY in the May issue of THE MERCURY.



LIONEL WIGGAM (*Evidence of April*) is a frequent contributor of verse to THE MERCURY, as well as to a number of other magazines.



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ix

THE AMERICAN MERCURY



CHECK LIST of NEW BOOKS

(Continued from page iv)

bit as earthy, vital, and distinctive as was Old Jules himself.



MEN IN SUN HELMETS.

By Vic Hurley. Dutton
\$2.50 5 3/4 x 8 1/4; 252 pp. New York

Mr. Hurley gives an exciting account of his years beneath a sun helmet, running a coconut factory, fighting Moros, and examining life in the less civilized sections of the Philippines. On his payroll were more than thirty graduates of San Ramon penitentiary, eighteen of whom were convicted murderers—a situation which tended to make his stay at the factory not uninteresting. The Mindanao islanders, as Mr. Hurley represents them, are confirmed believers in witchcraft, ghosts, and demons, as well as the usual forms of vice and brutality. The whole history of the island is based upon a traffic of women; drunkenness is as common as indigestion; and the Mohammedan Moros, who inhabit the island, are, according to the author, the most terrible warriors in the world. The fauna and flora are no less terrifying. There are trees whose very shade is poisonous; queer fish with legs which walk on the bottom of the sea; human-like monkeys which shield their eyes with their hands as they walk through sunlight; and ants which can consume whole bodies of men in two days, leaving only their shiny skeletons behind. There is malaria and dysentery. Yet, for all this, Mr. Hurley confesses at the end of the book that he enjoyed the life. "The tropics have been good to me." An exceptionally good travel book by a forthright writer and a hard-boiled traveler.



FIGHTING THE UNDERWORLD.

By Philip S. Van Cise. Houghton Mifflin
\$3 5 1/2 x 8 1/2; 369 pp. Boston

This is a detailed account of a young district attorney's courageous fight against a national racket which, at the time he entered office, was protected by politicians, police, and representative city officials. The Denver Bunco Ring, as it was called, was a veritable paradise of corruption. But in estimating its strength, it overlooked fearless opposition of one man who, in the course of a few years, was to expose it by its own subtle tactics of secret machination. In this book Mr. Van Cise, by telling the whole

story from beginning to end, makes a major contribution to the science of criminology. The book is illustrated, and contains an index.



PROPAGANDA AND THE NEWS.

By Will Irwin. Whittlesey House
\$2.75 5 3/4 x 9 1/4; 325 pp. New York

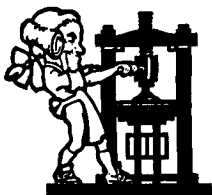
In this book Mr. Irwin tells the story of news as a major factor in modern civilization. He traces its rise in seventeenth-century Europe, its struggle against autocracy, its attainment of freedom through the influence of the American press, and its ultimate corruption by propagandists. The United States, in the second half of the nineteenth century, became the world laboratory for experiment with journalism. No other nation has ever been able to rival her in successful journalistic innovations. Today, while names such as Greeley, Godkin, Medill, and Dana are no longer common in the field, American newspapers continue to lead the way both in efficiency and mechanical technique, unhampered by government censorship and uninhibited by maidenly reticences. The book is rambling and uneven, but the story, much of which is told at first-hand by the author, is all here. There is an index.



THE THREAT TO EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION.

By Ludwig Freund. Sheed and Ward
\$1.50 5 x 7 1/2; 151 pp. New York

While proud of the part which Europe has played in the development of the human mind, Mr. Freund is filled with shame at the spectacle which, as a result of inferior leadership, she now presents to the world. Tracing at the outset the genesis and character of European culture, a task for which he is well-equipped as an historian, the author goes on to advance the thesis that this same culture must soon collapse unless some definite effort is made to rehabilitate the Catholic Church—which he accepts as the pillar of civilized society. In the direction we are now going, colossal catastrophes await us. Heathen sentiments are growing daily. "The ever-increasing attempts that were made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to replace religion by philosophy have resulted today in the cult of the State and 'Caesar' that was prevalent in the late imperial period of dying Rome." Neither Socialism nor Fascism can help us. We must, insists Mr. Freund, return to God.



Impressions

Achieving distinction through the impress of type upon paper is not without its problems, especially when production with economy and dispatch must be the credo. Haddon craftsmen are trained in the intricacies of black and color processes, and the results reflect their ability and interest in the task.

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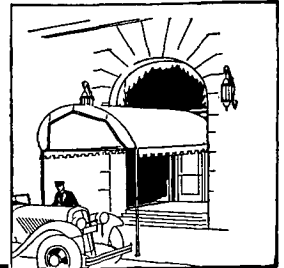
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Just when the faith of this department in Serge Koussevitzky was about to be permanently dissipated, Victor presents the eminent maestro in a recording that re-establishes an esteem more compatible with his traditional stature. To be sure, there was the recent second Sibelius symphony, ably directed, to his credit; on the other hand there was the more recent *G Minor Symphony* of Mozart largely to his discredit. The alteration of quality returns to the favorable side with this performance of the *A Major Symphony (Italian)* of Mendelssohn, in which the conductor's vitality and incisiveness are offset by none of the vagaries of tempo and accent that are frequently to be found in his interpretations. It is a reading of almost exemplary tastefulness, well-organized and beautifully presented. Though the recording is somewhat less brilliant than others on the month's list, it reproduces the characteristic qualities of the Boston Symphony Orchestra admirably, particularly in the final *salterello*, an extraordinary evidence of the band's virtuosity. (R C A-Victor, Album M-294, three 12-inch records, \$6.50.)

The reference to brilliance in recording, just above, was largely inspired by the astonishing quality of the reproduction in the new version of Stravinsky's *L'Oiseau de Feu* suite, by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. No doubt the excellence of the results achieved by Stokowski may be attributed to his interest in recording, and the pains he takes to keep high the standard of his accomplishment. As a result, these discs are an improvement even on his *Scheherazade* recording, the previous ultimate in fidelity. Although it is regrettable that performance of this quality should be expended on inconsequential music, this is a set of records worth while by their mere tonal splendor. (R C A-Victor, Album M-291, three 12-inch records, \$6.50.)

The list of Kirsten Flagstad records is augmented this month by her performance of *Elisabeth's Gebet* from *Tannhäuser*, which hardly seemed the inevitable choice for early release by this singer. Why she could not have first done *Isolde's Narrative*, or some other solo portion of the first act of *Tristan* which exists in no fully satisfactory version, I cannot say. The quality of the voice is full and rich, the German diction a model of correctness. This latter fact may be attributed, no doubt, to the circumstance that Flagstad is a Scandinavian. Hans Lange performs competently as the conductor. (R C A-Victor, one 12-inch record, \$2.)



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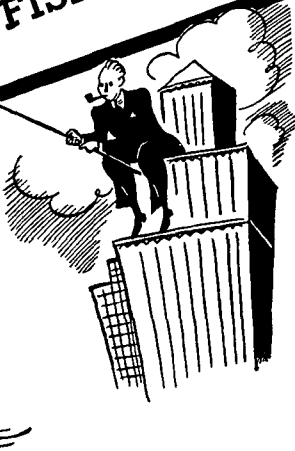
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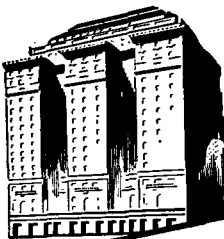
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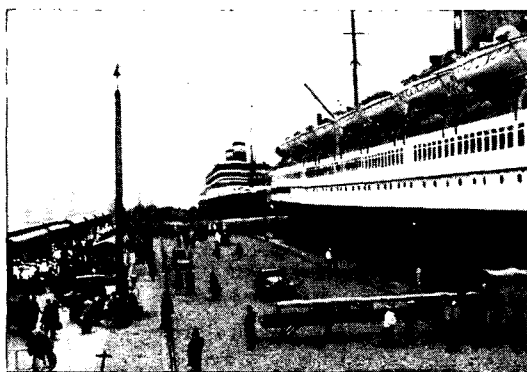
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